Around the World with the

Harlem Globetrotters

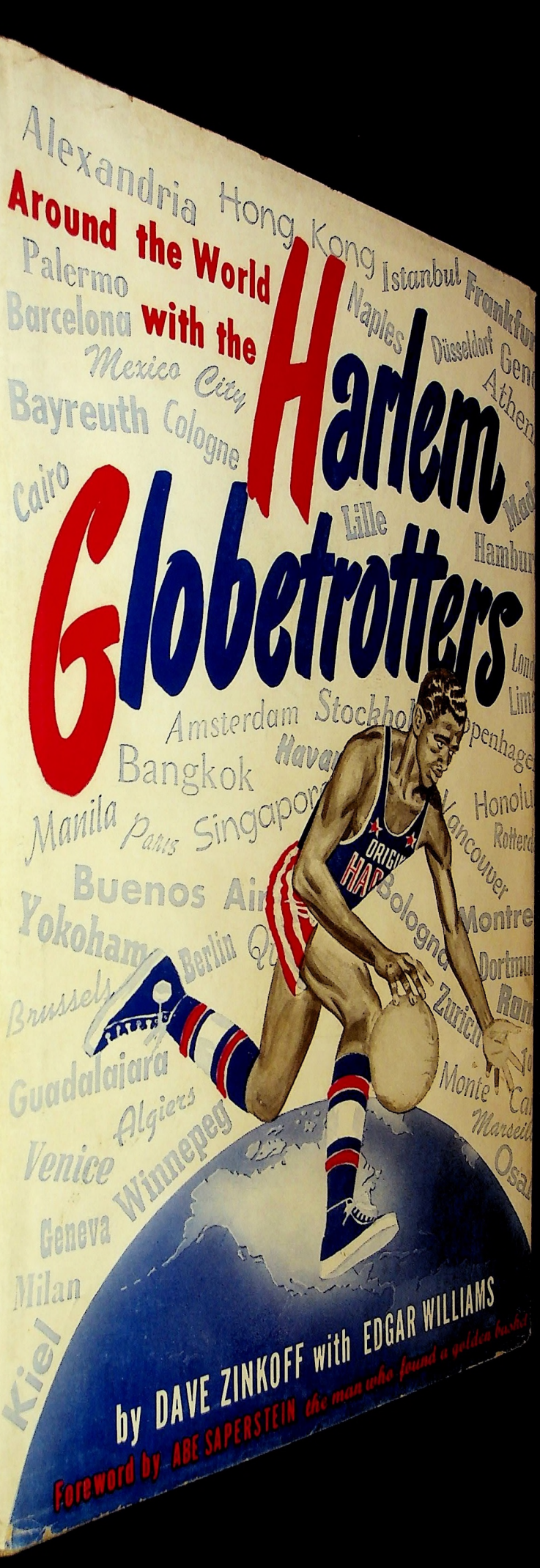


by DAVE ZINKOFF with EDGAR WILLIAMS

Foreword by ABE SAPERSTEIN *the man who found a golden basket*

Around the World with the Harlem Globetrotters DAVE ZINKOFF with EDGAR WILLIAMS Macrae-Smith

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EDGAR WILLIAMS

This is the amazing story of one of the greatest sports organizations of all time, and the fulfillment of the dream of a dynamic Chicagoan, Abe Saperstein, the P. T. Barnum of the sports world. It shows that America's athletic skill and sportsmanship can be a new and positive force in international relations.

To the soft shuffling rhythm of "Sweet Georgia Brown" the Harlem Globetrotters have demonstrated unbeatable basketball and brilliant showmanship from England, through western Europe, Africa, the Near and Far East, to the Pacific Islands and across the United States. Taking with them a portable seven-ton court, these suitcase-carrying ambassadors of good will have played the game where it was never played before and in many places where an anti-American feeling gave way to cheers after a night of ball-handling wizardry and the circus clowning of Goose Tatum.

Basketball fans by the arena-full, diplomats, and the American public at large will react with pride and absorbing interest to this thrilling account of the Globetrotters' ventures around the world.

59 photographs.
Jacket design by Joe Letven.

$2.95

AROUND THE WORLD WITH THE *Harlem Globetrotters* ☆ ☆ ☆

AROUND the WORLD
WITH THE
Harlem Globetrotters

by DAVE ZINKOFF *with*
EDGAR WILLIAMS

Foreword by Abe Saperstein

Illustrated with photographs

☆ ☆ ☆

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☆ Foreword

I consider myself the most fortunate person on earth. For I am the man who found a golden basket.

In 1927, when the Harlem Globetrotters came into being, the possibility that the team would some day justify the "Globetrotters" part of its title seemed as remote as some far-distant planet. For years I dreamed of the time when we would be able to travel around the world, playing basketball as we went, and in places where it had never been played before.

Now that dream has been realized. We celebrated our twenty-fifth anniversary by making the first world tour in the history of basketball. And from ten thousand tales of a group of basketball nomads, Dave Zinkoff, my secretarial Man Friday, and Edgar Williams have written *Around the World with the Harlem Globetrotters.*

They have packed it all in—the laughs, the drama and the occasional poignancy that have been the Globetrotter story through the years. During the world tour Zinkoff carefully kept a diary which, naturally, was of interest to all of us in the party. But none of us realized that the rather cryptic notes in that diary would be expanded into an absorbing book. Zinkoff and Williams have done just that.

The game of basketball has come of age. There are more than sixty countries in the International Basketball Federation; with more than two thousand registered teams in France and Italy, and about half that number in Belgium, Spain and Switzerland; with a reported million male and female basketball players in the Soviet Republics; with the cage sport the national game in the Philippines, and with tremendous interest

in China, Japan, Singapore, Formosa, Hawaii, South America, the Middle East and North Africa. I truly believe that the day is not far off when basketball will be recognized as *the* international sport.

The Globetrotters carried around the world the American creed of sportsmanship and proved, once and for all, that sports is an effective common denominator. We erected basketball courts where there weren't any, made friends and, in our own way, tried to "sell America" wherever we went.

I think we succeeded.

ABE SAPERSTEIN,
Owner-Manager of the Harlem Globetrotters

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AROUND THE WORLD WITH THE *Harlem Globetrotters* ☆ ☆ ☆

☆ *Now Hear This!*

IT WAS RAINING. BUT NO ONE HAD GONE HOME. ALL ABOUT me in the crowded stadium people were cheering in a tongue I couldn't understand. They were laughing, too, and that I could understand, for laughter knows no language barrier. On the thoroughly drenched basketball court before me there was a flash of red, white and blue uniforms as five Negro athletes, unmindful of the elements, whipped a ball around with bewildering rapidity. Every movement brought cries of approval from the crowd.

This was a night for remaining indoors. Yet on this night, in this place—half a world from home—where basketball had never been played before, a group of Americans had attracted a capacity crowd to watch them throw a ball through a hoop in the rain. Sitting at the courtside press table, I did some reflective thinking: What was I doing here? How had I been selected to play a part in one of the most significant dramas the sports world ever had produced?

It had started with a telephone call—

One night in February of 1952 I was quietly minding my own business, which means that I was asleep. One of the advantages of being a bachelor is that you can retire when you please, get up when you please and do what you please.

I mention these tremendously unimportant details by way of pointing up my feeling of revulsion toward the human race *in toto* when my telephone rang at approximately 1 A.M. I groped for the instrument.

"Mr. David Zinkoff, please," said the voice. Yeah, I said. I am not at my conversational best at 1 A.M.

"One moment, please," the voice went on. "I have a call for you from Chicago."

Who would be calling me from Chicago at this hour? I waited. Finally, after a series of strange noises that sounded as though A. T. & T. was just completing installation of the line to Chicago, a man's voice said: "Zink?"

"Yeah," I said, being consistent.

"Abe Saperstein," the voice said. "Did I get you out of bed?"

"No," I replied, truthfully. "What's up?"

"Now hear this," Abe said. "I've got a proposition for you. You'll like it."

Now it should be explained that Abe Saperstein is a tubful of Old World charm whose idea of the full life is to make telephone calls, compose and send telegrams and cables in job lots, and go flitting about the world on the flimsiest of excuses. He is the proprietor of the Harlem Globetrotters, a collection of zany basketball players who in recent years have extracted more dollars and laughs from their favorite sport than Marilyn Monroe has calendars. The Globetrotters do not come from Harlem and they trot only when necessary, but they are the most successful basketball team on earth, both financially and artistically. Promoters from Sioux Falls to Singapore who have booked the Trotters and profited thereby are in the habit of facing toward Abe Saperstein's headquarters in Chicago and bowing deeply three times a day.

Saperstein is the man who presided at the happy marriage of comedy and basketball. For more than twenty-five years his team has been winning games and making people laugh. The Trotters play for laughs. They shoot baskets while sitting down or riding piggy-back. They are a combination of the old shell game, Martin and Lewis, and Ray Bolger. For all this, they usually finish on the long end of the score. It adds up to the highest victory percentage ever compiled by any team in a major sport—and an annual gross of between two and three million dollars.

So when Abe Saperstein gives you a call and tells you he has a proposition you'll like, the least you can do is listen.

"What's the deal?" I asked, somewhat apprehensively.

I say "apprehensively" because Saperstein is a man of such persuasive charm that he could talk an Eskimo into moving to the Congo, igloo and all. I had known Abe for three years, about as well as the average person knows his neighbor two doors down the street, and if he had asked me at that moment to hop a plane to the Orkney Islands to deliver a message for him, I wouldn't have been surprised. I probably would have delivered it, too.

"You're going on a trip," Abe said.

"That's nice," I said. "What's the gimmick?"

"Is that any way to talk?" Abe said in a hurt tone. "To think that you should think I have a gimmick cuts me deeply. Say you're sorry, so we can start all over again as though nothing ever happened."

"O.K.," I said. "I'm sorry you have been cut deeply. Now what's the gimmick?"

"I told you," Abe went on. "You're taking a trip. Now hear this. You leave New York on May 31, and you go around the world."

Just like that. Me, a fellow who bridles at the thought

of traveling from Philadelphia to Camden, New Jersey. I'm going around the world, and Saperstein makes it sound like a walk to the corner super-market.

"Fine, Abe," I said. "This is the best gag you've pulled since you bought stock in the St. Louis Browns. Now what do you really want?"

"How many times do I have to tell you?" Saperstein said. "You're going around the world with me and the Globetrotters. This is our silver anniversary year, and we're going to live up to our name, and you're going along as general manager and traveling secretary. I told you you'd like it."

I was rendered speechless for the next ten seconds, which will come as a shock to a lot of people who would take a blood oath that I was born talking. In my mind's eye I could see Monsieur David Zinkoff, boulevardier, strolling along the Champs-Elysées . . . David Zinkoff, man about town, catching admiring glances in Piccadilly Circus . . . Dave Zinkahanamoku, surfboard rider extraordinary, entertaining the throngs at Waikiki Beach. In a trice I threw off my objections to travel.

Then sanity returned.

"Can't do it, Abe," I said. "I'm booked to handle the public address system for the A's and Phillies ball games at Shibe Park this summer. Also, we have a couple of big fights coming up here and I may have to do the announcing. Not only that, but——"

"Cut it out," Saperstein interrupted. "How many times do you get a chance to travel around the world and be paid for it?"

"But I've got commitments."

"I'll call the A's and Phillies and get you off the hook. They're reasonable people. You can start the season at the ball park, but as of midnight on May 30 you're the general

manager and traveling secretary of the Harlem Globetrotters.

"And if you're afraid your voice is going to get rusty, we'll give you another job. You can announce all the games we play in English-speaking countries. I'll be in Philadelphia in a couple of weeks to discuss details. I knew you'd see it my way. Good-by."

And he hung up.

That was how it all began. I was in a giddy whirl only slightly symptomatic of the vertigo I was to experience during the next few months as nursemaid, father confessor and Mr. Anthony to one of the wackiest groups of humans ever to walk on this planet or travel around it.

Before things stopped spinning I was to be a part of the first round-the-world tour in the sixty-year history of basketball; travel fifty-two thousand miles and visit thirty-four nations; get snarled in the syntax of eighteen languages; wind up with the fullest-blown hangover an abstemious man can acquire; and return with the twin convictions that sports can be the broadest meeting ground in the world, and that the Harlem Globetrotters have done more to promote good will toward America abroad than all the diplomats in the striped-pants set.

Anyone with the perception of a retarded mollusk must have realized by this time that I am neither a flag-waver nor a professional tolerance salesman. I'm a character who lives for laughs, and when people begin talking too much about social significance within my hearing I make loud, uncomplimentary noises. So if you expect me to suggest that sports are the cure-all for this world's ills, close the book right now.

After all, more than one Olympiad has wound up with a lot of international name-calling. And I can remember

being pelted with obsolete produce in a boxing ring one night because I announced—in the line of duty—to a houseful of true-blue American fight fans that a foreigner had been adjudged the conqueror of a domestic boxer.

As for peddling tolerance as though it were something that could be put on like a shirt, I want no part of it. I don't think much of the stock platitudes dealing with sports. I doubt that a green-eyed man who dislikes all blue-eyed men is going to change his opinion simply because some guy with blue eyes can run faster or hit a ball farther than anyone else. But if that blue-eyed athlete, through attitude as well as performance, can cause the green-eyed man to begin to wonder just a little about the validity of his prejudice, then there is hope that some day he may be enlightened.

For example. The Globetrotter itinerary took us into Egypt at a time when that country was about as healthy for anyone who wasn't an Egyptian as Ebbets Field is for an umpire who has just given the Brooklyn Dodgers the worst of it on a close one. For that matter, some of the local citizenry hadn't been doing too well. Farouk and his hangers-on had just been given the bounce. Anti-British—and with it, anti-American—feeling was running high among the home folks. Nobody planted bombs in our hotel rooms in Cairo, understand, but we got the fishy eye nearly everywhere we went that first day. If a camel had sneaked up and nipped me in the vicinity of the pistol pocket, I wouldn't have been surprised.

The Cairo newspapers were polite to us, but indulged in no typographical hip-hooraying. And when we appeared on the floor that night at the Gezira Sporting Club the six thousand spectators looked for all the world like that breed of American who sits on his hands at a vaudeville show and gives the performers that I-dare-you-to-entertain-me look.

Only these people appeared much more ominous.

The game began. At first it was straight basketball, and the customers sat there in what was as close to silence as any large gathering can get. You know what they say about a young child—when he's making noise he's all right but when he's quiet, look out. That's how it usually is with a sports crowd. And when that sports crowd has come with a preconceived notion that it isn't going to like what it sees, it is time for men of good will to get ready to man the life rafts.

I was in charge of the troupe at the time, Saperstein having flown back to the United States for a few days to lend money to Fort Knox or buy the Grand Canyon or something. I do not claim to be clairvoyant, but I can smell trouble approaching before it turns the corner. So I called Babe Pressley, the stand-in coach of the Globetrotters during Abe's absence.

"We have," I told him earnestly, "a situation on our hands."

"Yeah," Pressley said. "What's wrong with these people? You'd think they never saw a basketball game before."

"Most of them haven't," I said. "But are we going to be the middlemen in an international incident? Look, Babe—call time out and tell the boys that if they ever put on a clown act, this is the time."

Babe frowned. "But it's a little early for that," he said.

Even though this was Egypt, a Chinese proverb seemed appropriate. "It's later than you think, Babe," I told him. "A lot later. Now call time out and tell the boys to start cutting up."

Whether it was my eloquence or the expression on my face, I don't know. Whatever it was, Pressley called time

and gathered the Trotters about him. When play was resumed the boys turned on the comedy.

Even I, who had watched them play hundreds of times and wasn't in a laughing mood at the moment, had to chuckle. Here and there in the stands I could see tense faces slowly breaking into smiles, and before the end of the first half the joint was jumping with guffaws.

"That's it," I told Pressley at halftime. "Keep it going like that, and we'll be all right——"

"Man," Babe said, "you think that was somethin'? Wait'll you see the second half. We'll really give it to 'em."

As they say in show business, the Trotters killed 'em. Most of the spectators didn't know a dribble from a Dodge, but they had fun. They seemed to realize that what they were looking at was artistry—ball-handling, accurate shooting and precision. These things and comedy, too. Comedy —really good comedy—is an international language.

The next day a writer on one of the Cairo newspapers devoted a full column to his impressions of the game. For my money, he said it all with one line:

"When one laughs," he wrote, "one cannot hate."

Now I'm not so addlepated as to believe that the Harlem Globetrotters made all Egyptians love all Americans because of one basketball game. But I do believe that most of the Egyptians who saw the Trotters and went away laughing came to the conclusion that maybe we Americans aren't such ogres after all.

☆ *The Chicago Combination*

THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS CAME INTO BEING BECAUSE Abe Saperstein had a decrepit automobile and no job. I suppose the moral of this is that if you want to wind up as proprietor of the greatest attraction in sports, you should go to Chicago and begin consulting road maps.

Abe got to Chicago by way of London, England. He was born in the Whitechapel district of London in 1900. He is about one sole-thickness higher than five feet, and in what he maintains was his athletic prime weighed about one hundred and ten pounds. The new, enlarged Abe Saperstein is round, firm and fully packed, with a dedication to becoming as wide as he is tall.

Jack Solomons, England's leading prize fight promoter, was born in Whitechapel, too, and every time he sees Abe he inquires: " 'Ow's the Whitechapel Kid?" The fact is that Saperstein doesn't remember much about living in London, because he was brought to this country when he was six. His father was a tailor who settled his wife and ten children in the Ravenswood section of Chicago and began plugging away at making ends meet. The Supersteins were just about the only Jewish family in a predominantly Irish and German neighborhood, and Abe was always the smallest kid around.

He learned early that he had to compensate for his lack

of heft. Any kid who figured he had a soft touch with Abe in a fist fight found that he was up against a pocket-size Battling Nelson. Abe had learned to box by sneaking into gymnasiums where fighters were training. He didn't have to fight often, though. One of his best friends was an Irish youngster named Tom Gallery, now a prominent television sports producer. Tom was husky, strong and the son of a police captain. He and Abe hit it off well, and it became axiomatic that to fight Abe meant another go-round with Tom. After it had been established that to tangle with the Saperstein-Gallery duo almost invariably meant a double-header trouncing, peace reigned in the neighborhood.

A tailor with ten kids seldom has much extra spending money. Papa Saperstein was no exception. So Abe and his brothers and sisters worked at odd jobs after school. "Some weeks we made as much as a quarter apiece," Abe has said. "We figured we were doing good. We didn't have much in those days, but we got along and we were happy." In his old neighborhood Saperstein is remembered as an amiable, energetic youth who talked incessantly about sports. "Abe was a leader," says Saperstein's younger sister, Fay, who now manages his New York office for him. "He made friends easily and kept them. Our house was the headquarters for the boys in the neighborhood. One baseball season, I remember, Abe played second base for a Catholic parochial school team, even though he was a student in the public school down the street. After a game, he would bring the other boys home with him for supper. The noise was deafening."

At Chicago's Lake View High School, Saperstein was a pretty fair basketball and baseball player, as well as a sprinter on the track team, but he knew that his size was against his ever becoming a collegiate or professional big-

timer. He spent a year at the University of Illinois after working one summer as an itinerant wheat-harvester to earn money to pay his way, but he withdrew after the second semester because he was broke, and he had been told that he wasn't big enough ever to make a varsity team in any sport, let alone develop into an Illini athletic great.

So Saperstein did the next best thing. He became a coach. I contend that this was one of the best things that ever happened to sports.

Possibly because he was little and a member of a minority, and because he knew better than most what it was like to get the short end of the well-known stick, he went into youth welfare work, working as a counselor and coach at Chicago playgrounds. The pay did little more than keep Abe in groceries, but it was a living. "Besides," Saperstein has remarked, "I got a big kick out of helping kids. Maybe that sounds corny, but that's how it was."

By 1925 Saperstein was coaching at Welles Park, a playground on Chicago's North Side, and was enjoying considerable success with a 135-pound basketball team, called the "Chicago Reds." In view of present conditions it should be noted that "Reds" had neither political nor ideological connotations. The kids themselves chose the name because they liked the sound.

Anyway, at about that time a Negro team representing the Giles Post, American Legion, was playing occasional one-night stands within fairly easy traveling distance of Chicago. It was a good team basically, but, as sometimes happens, ennui set in. The owner, Walter Ball, a one-time star pitcher in Negro baseball, decided to get himself a new coach. Early in 1926 he called upon Saperstein.

"I've heard about the job you're doing with the kids at

Welles Park," Ball said. "Think you could handle a bunch of men?"

"Can they play basketball?" Abe inquired.

"They can," replied Ball, "when they want to."

"Then," Abe said, "I can handle them."

He joined the team in Neenah-Menasha, Wisconsin, and things picked up almost immediately. They picked up so well, in fact, that pretty soon Abe and the boys found what they had reason to believe would be a more or less permanent home.

The Savoy Ballroom in the Harlem section of New York City had become famous (remember the song, "Stompin' at the Savoy"?), and its owners decided to extend operations. So another Savoy Ballroom was built in the South Side of Chicago. Late in the 1925–1926 season Dick Hudson, the business manager of the Giles Post team, approached the Savoy people with a proposition.

"You're right in the middle of a sports-minded area," he said. "You ought to cash in on that. Why don't you augment your dancing programs with a couple of nights of basketball every week next season? Basketball is a growing sport. You'll do all right at the gate."

The Savoy people were interested. But how about an attraction?

"We've got a natural," Hudson said. "We'll move our team into your place, adopt the Savoy name and build up a following. It can't miss."

The deal was made, and on a blustery night in November, 1926, the Giles Post team, renamed the Savoy Big Five, took the floor in its new home. About all the Big Five got was the floor, because the attendance was in the unsatisfactory neighborhood of twenty.

The attendance got no better fast. No throng of wild-

eyed fans ever flattened the doors of the Savoy Ballroom in an effort to get a look at the Big Five. Also, there were financial disagreements between some of the players on one hand and Hudson on the other—the old story of labor versus management. The disagreements were completely honest, understand, but not even an arbitration board made up of Beatrice Fairfax, Dorothy Dix and Mr. Anthony could have resolved them.

Finally, when it became obvious that an impasse had been reached, Saperstein and the discontented players decided to break away from the Savoy outfit and form a new team.

"The night we made the decision," Saperstein has remarked, "we had no definite plans. We just decided to bow out of the Savoy set-up. There were three players—Walter 'Toots' Wright, Byron 'Fat' Long and Willis 'Kid' Oliver—and me. The boys asked me to go along with them and I said yes. It didn't seem so at the time, but it was the best break I ever got. If we hadn't gone out on our own, I still might be hustling to make a living in Chicago."

So there was Abe with no job, no place to play—and three hungry basketball players who looked upon him as a sort of paterfamilias. But he had an overwhelming urge to become a promoter as well as a coach, and when that happens to a fellow like Saperstein it is like being nipped by an anopheles mosquito. A fever results.

"I'm going to put together a team and make money," he said in the tone of some Horatio Alger hero. Only, when you're walking around flat-pocket the way Abe was, you don't figure like an Alger boy.

Abe's friends assured him that he was daft. To which the young man replied that he was going to make a success of this project if it killed him. It very nearly did. Even today,

on the rare occasions when the Globetrotters lose, Abe dies a million deaths.

Tony Lavelli, the former Yale All-American, who was a member of the New York Celtics, the topflight exhibition team that opposed the Trotters in ninety of the hundred and forty-one games played during the world tour (Tony now plays the accordion in theaters and night clubs for a living, and I think it is safe to call him basketball's handsomest gift to show business), once told me: "I consider Abe among my closest friends, but I have learned that it's best to stay away from him after his team loses. He is downcast, morbid and just plain hurt. The Globetrotters are his life."

But it wasn't infrequent losses that nearly sent Abe to the showers back in 1927. It was the problem of regrouping his forces and keeping them grouped. Then came the even larger problem of finding work. Maintaining a team with no bookings is like attempting to make a ham sandwich with two slices of bread and no ham.

One day Abe made an announcement that convinced all who knew him that he really had begun to hear strange noises.

"There isn't much for us in Chicago," he said. "We're going to travel and pick up games wherever we can."

Saperstein could hardly have decided on anything that would have caused a greater stir among his friends. For one thing, basketball still was regarded with something akin to suspicion in many sections of the rural Midwest; young men who ran around in public in their lingerie were considered slightly—well, that is, they were thought to be not as virile as young men should be. Also, an independent Negro team had little hope of playing in arenas in the large cities—especially a team that never had been more than a huff and a puff from Chicago.

"You're nuts!" chorused all those who were determined to save Abe from himself.

"Thank you for your confidence," Abe answered. "Now here's the picture: we're going on the road in January, and we're calling ourselves the Harlem Globetrotters."

"Why?" somebody wanted to know. "Not one of you has ever been to Harlem. And what's with this 'Globetrotters'? That sounds as if you've traveled around the world."

"That's just it," Saperstein said. " 'Harlem' identifies the boys as a colored team. 'Harlem Globetrotters' makes it sound as if we have been around. Who knows? Maybe some day we really will travel around the world."

Yeah, people said. Oh, sure. Maybe some day Abe Saperstein and his team would travel around the world. And maybe some day it would rain silver dollars and Lake Michigan's waters would change to milk and honey. That Abe Saperstein, they said. A nice guy, but with too many screwball ideas.

To fill out his team Abe signed a lanky center named Andy Washington, who had played college basketball at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and Bill Tupelo, from Kansas City, Missouri. Put them all together—Wright, Long, Oliver, Washington and Tupelo—and you have the first edition of what was to become one of the most famous teams in the history of sports.

In January, 1927, the Harlem Globetrotters went into business. Their first trip took them from the South Side across town to the Loyola University gymnasium—probably the shortest jump the Trotters ever have made. Kenneth L. "Tug" Wilson, now the athletic commissioner of the Big Ten Intercollegiate Conference, remembers the occasion.

"Abe had been guaranteed twenty-five dollars," Wilson has said, "but the gate receipts amounted to only eleven

dollars. The promoter went to Saperstein and said: 'I don't know how I am going to pay you, because I have been having rough sledding myself.'

" 'That's all right,' Abe said. 'Give me five bucks and we'll go out and get some sandwiches.' "

After that experience, Abe put the show on the road—on roads that led away from Chicago, that is. The means of transportation was a Model T Ford that Abe had purchased from a funeral director. Whatever he paid for it probably was too much, because the car had long since seen its better days.

Abe was the driver. He also listed himself on the team roster as owner, coach, manager, trainer and substitute. That "substitute" touch was no gag. Until the mid-Thirties, when he increased the size of the squad to seven, Abe suited up for every game. Whenever a Trotter got hurt or needed a breather, in went Saperstein. An accomplished dribbler, he fitted into the combination neatly. He was, of course, at least a head shorter than anyone else on the court, and this served to heighten his appeal, if you'll forgive the mixing of a metaphor. In many a town throughout the nation Abe is remembered by basketball followers as the little man who donned an overcoat atop his uniform at halftime of a game and remained on the court to count the house.

So the Globetrotters bade farewell to Chicago and headed into the sticks. "The date," Saperstein often has said, "was January 7, 1927. A lot of guys said the team would fold before March 1, but they forgot to say in what year."

That first season the Globetrotters toured Illinois, going from town to town and booking games wherever and whenever a local promoter could be found who would take a chance on them. Once Abe ran into a big-time operator who assured him that the Trotters had found a good spot

at last. "My promotions always draw big," the fellow said. "I'll give you a good deal—a guarantee of twenty-five dollars, with an option of forty per cent of the gate."

This was strictly Golconda—until the gate was counted. Seems that the big-time operator had overreached himself. The total take was $5.95.

Saperstein flipped a nickel to the promoter. "This makes it six bucks even," he said. "Now give us our forty per cent, which amounts to two-forty."

The promoter was amazed. "But the guarantee meant that you'd get forty per cent of the gate only if it amounted to more than the guarantee," he said. "I owe you twenty-five bucks."

"You owe us two-forty," Abe replied. "Maybe we'll be back this way again some time and things will be better. If they are, we'll talk about this guarantee then."

It would be nice—and very dramatic—to be able to report that the promoter was Ned Irish or Bill Veeck or Jim Norris or some other guy who went on to bigger things, and that he got his inspiration from this experience with Abe Saperstein. The truth is that the promoter was a small-town boy who never amounted to much—at least, nobody outside his town ever heard of him—and the Globetrotters never went back.

At first, the Globetrotters played orthodox basketball. But as the tour continued it became clear that Abe would have to slow down the pace his tigers were setting.

For one thing, as they say in sports circles, the Trotters' gears were beginning to grind. When a team is playing night after night (the Globetrotters played seventy-seven games, winning seventy-one of them, that first season; they now play—and get this—upwards of three hundred games a year), it obviously cannot bear down with the old school

try throughout each game. It cannot, that is, if it desires to keep its personnel out of cardiac clinics.

Then, too, the average team the Globetrotters encountered in the boondocks would have had trouble beating the Vassar daisy chain squad. While Abe had only five regulars, they were among the best of their time. They made most of their opponents look so goofy that the games usually ceased to be contests after the first few minutes.

In almost any exhibition game, especially one played in a small town, it is a sports truism that if you make the local talent look like bums—no matter how classy you are yourself—you seldom get invited back. But if you manage to squeak through by the thinnest of margins—and this may call for great self-restraint—you're a cinch to be booked for a return match.

Saperstein, the coach, delighted in watching his young men clobber the opposition. But Saperstein, the owner, realized that the young men not only were wearing themselves out but were playing themselves right out of the few markets willing to handle their wares. So to render happy the citizens of Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat and Sauk Center, and with a view toward saving the component parts of his employees, Abe began to add comedy routines to conventional basketball.

The Trotters began looking one way and passing the ball another. They bounced the ball off their heads into the basket. They flipped the ball behind their backs and shot goals backward between their legs. They lined up in football formation, with the "center" snapping the ball to the "tailback" and the other three players racing downcourt yelling for a pass. They even introduced a modified form of baseball, with a "pitcher," "catcher," "batter" and two "fielders"—while their opponents strove unsuccessfully to

gain possession of the ball. Sometimes two Trotters would bewilder the enemy with a series of machine-gun-like passes while the other three sprawled beneath their own basket, reading a newspaper or playing cards.

Inman Jackson, rated by Saperstein as one of the Trotters' all-time greats, joined the team in 1929 and was the club's first super-clown. Jackson, who was a Globetrotter for fourteen seasons and now is one of Abe's assistants, did just about everything but eat the ball. Later the Trotters *did* eat the ball. Saperstein came up with the gimmick of having a loaf of pumpernickel bread made in the shape of a basketball and at some juncture of a game, after a quiet substitution had been made, the Trotters would tear the "ball" to shreds and eat it.

Probably Inman Jackson's most impressive bit involved a lot of hocus-pocus, faking a pass this way, feinting another that way, until he had his guard completely baffled. Then, after one more fake pass, Inman would place the ball on top of the guard's head and walk away, leaving the gentleman convinced that he was ready for the man with the long white coat.

Ed "Moose" Krause, the former Notre Dame football and basketball All-American, who now is director of athletics at his alma mater, remembers a game he played as a member of the Minnesota All-Stars against the Trotters at Winona, Minnesota, in 1936. The All-Stars were made up of standout players from Notre Dame, the University of Minnesota and St. Mary's College, and they considered their games with the Globetrotters the most important of any campaign. From 1934 to 1940 the All-Stars played the Trotters at least ten times a season.

"Inman Jackson and I had some great duels," Krause said not long ago. "Inman was one of the greatest players

in the game, and I was young and frisky and could shoot fairly well. I outscored Jackson a few times, but he got even on one occasion."

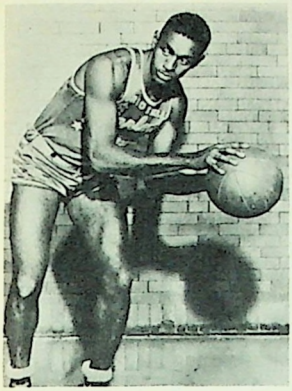
The All-Stars were trailing in the last few minutes of this game, and the Trotters went into their clown routine. The crowd began to laugh, and the laughter became uproarious when Jackson walked to the center of the court, folded his arms and simply stood there.

"I couldn't figure it out," said Krause. "There I was, intent upon guarding Jackson, feet well spread, ready to meet him when he broke for the basket. What I didn't know was that one of the other Trotters had laid the ball on the floor between my feet. So there was Inman, leisurely observing the game, and the crowd was laughing at me.

"I finally figured it out. I looked down, saw the ball and lost my temper. I kicked the ball into the crowd, dove into Jackson and we had the darnedest wrestling match anyone ever put on. Jackson kept yelling: 'I didn't do it, Moose! I didn't *do* it!'

"This was the most amusing and embarrassing thing that ever happened to me. Inman and I have been good friends ever since, but he never fails to remind me of this incident."

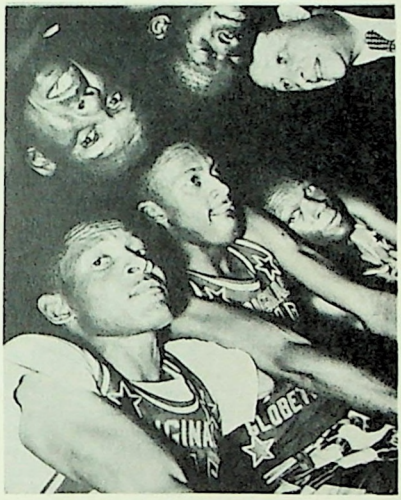
The zany stuff made a hit with the customers from the start, although it wasn't until nearly twenty years later that they expressed their appreciation by shoving currency through the ticket windows in large amounts. The Trotters would roar into a comfortable lead, then go into their carnival acts. Nearly every night somebody came up with a new twist, with the result that the modern Globetrotters, many of whom were in diapers when the first brave band began trotting, have a repertory of hundreds of tricks which is their heritage.











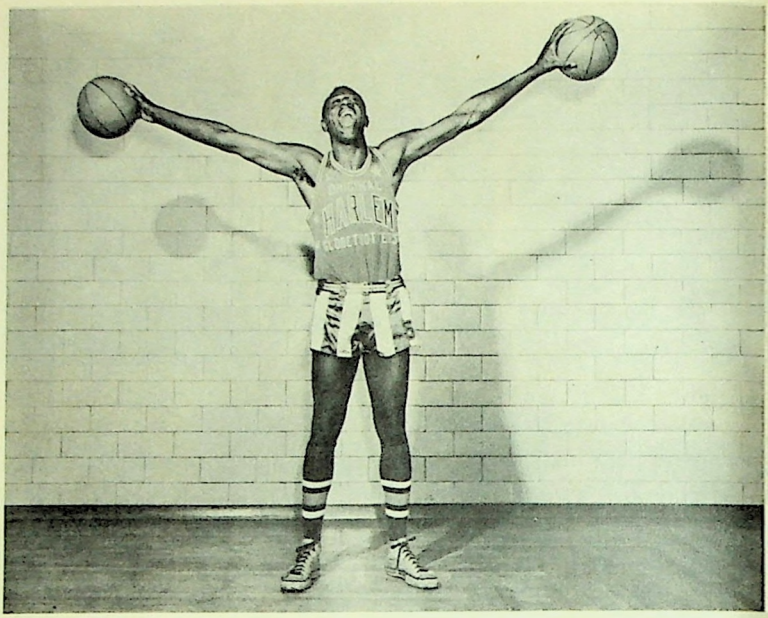


Now hear this!





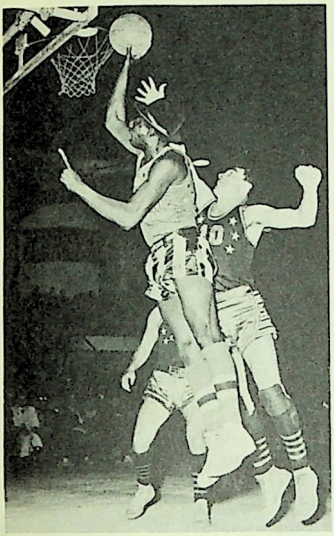


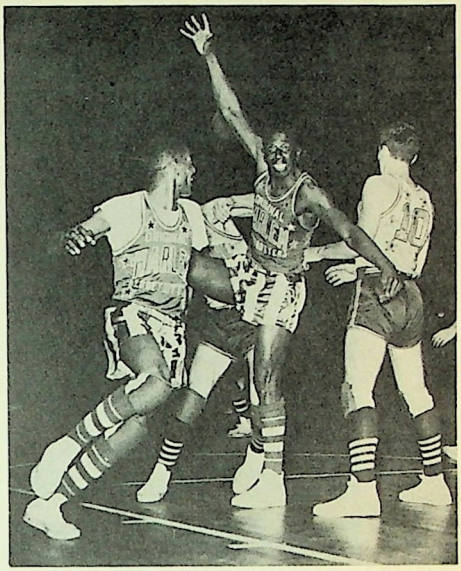


Goose Tatum—basketball's incomparable funnyman

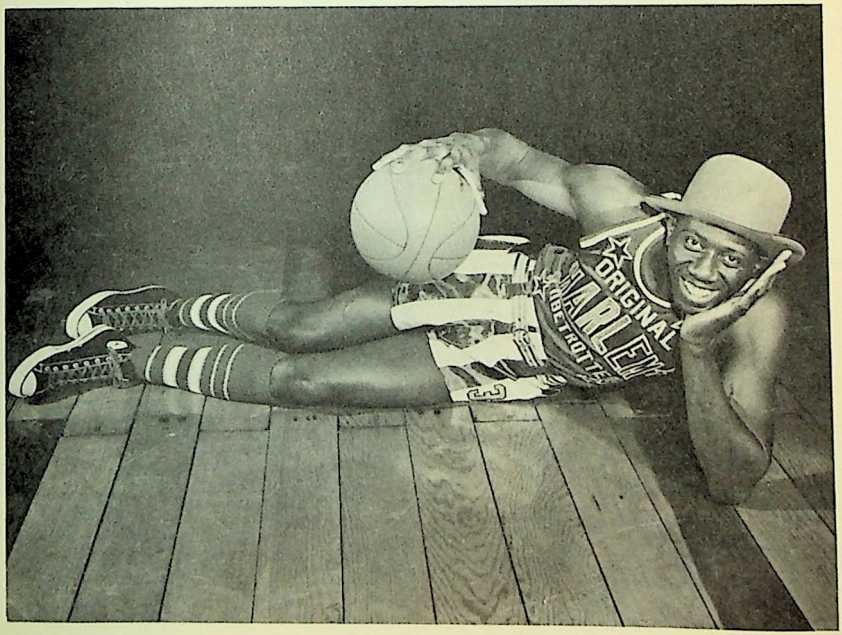


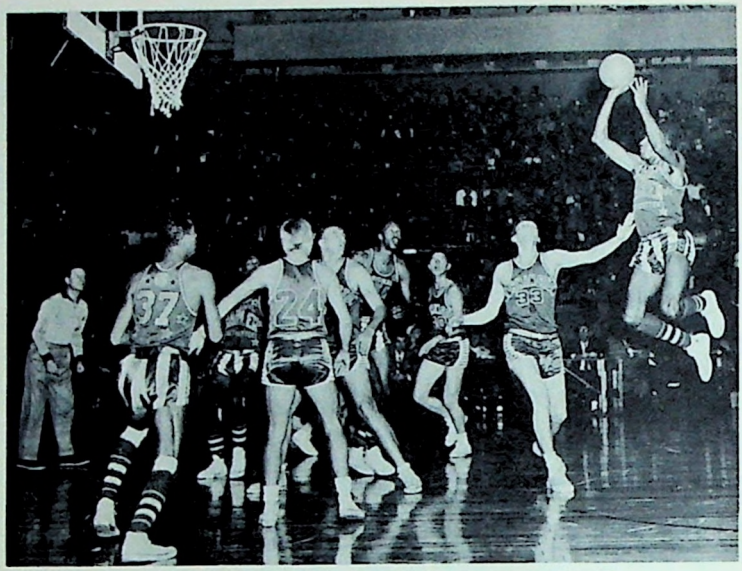






Goose on the loose







Wizardry at work





Granted, it's antic humor. But only a superbly trained athlete can bring it off. Try spinning a basketball on the tip of your index finger for thirty seconds, or throwing a ball across the living room with so much back-spin that it will bounce right back to you. You can't do it? Go stand in a corner and feel ashamed of yourself. Every one of the Trotters can do these things—plus about two hundred and ninety-eight other tricks—as effortlessly as you walk across the street.

Some years ago a high school instructor in the small town of Cuba, Kentucky, wrote to Adolph Rupp, the University of Kentucky basketball coach.

"I have just been appointed basketball coach here," the teacher explained. "Frankly, I know very little about the fine points of the game. I might be able to learn enough to do a reasonably good job if I could study movies illustrating the system you use. Could you please send me such a film?"

Nearly every major college coach gets dozens of requests each season for movies that can be used as coaching aids. Rupp turned the letter over to a secretary, who sent the Cuba coach a can of film. A few months later the Cuba High kids showed up at a Kentucky state high school basketball tournament and nearly tore their bracket of the tourney apart with their sizzling performances. They went all the way to the final round before losing to Clark County High.

Even more astounding was the way the Cuba team played. The boys dribbled behind their backs, worked triple pivots, made bounce passes with back spin and sank some of the zaniest shots ever seen in the Blue Grass State.

Later the Cuba coach sought out Rupp. "I want to thank you for that film," he said. "Your system certainly helped us."

"My system?" the bewildered Rupp replied. "What gave you the idea that was my system?"

"It *must* be your system," the high school coach said. "We used everything on the film you sent us."

Rupp investigated and found that his secretary had sent a movie of the Globetrotters to Cuba by mistake. By employing the tactics of the Trotters, a group of kids who had been nonentities at the start of the season had become one of the most successful teams in the state.

To the average onlooker the Globetrotters appear to be moving fast and furiously when they put on their comedy routines. This simply goes to prove that the optic nerve can be fooled. Actually the Trotters are resting. Next time you see them make with the laugh material, watch their feet. The ball may be moving like a cat on a hot stove, but the Trotters are picking up and laying down their tootsies with the ease of a man who has no place to go and all day to get there. Usually in a forty-minute game the Trotters bear down for about twenty-two minutes and cut up during the other eighteen.

Saperstein has a house rule that his players must not go to extremes to make an opponent look foolish when the shenanigans start. The business of confusing an opponent, then placing the ball on top of his noggin, isn't used until it has been determined that the intended victim is the good-natured sort who will get as big a belt out of it as anyone else. Sometimes opposing players are so carried away by the Trotters' artistry that they try to get into the act.

Now and then in the old days somebody made the mistake of implying that only by hamming it up could the Trotters be sure of winning. One night in Woodfibre, British Columbia, in the early Thirties, the Globetrotters took a frightful ear-banging from their opponents during the pre-

game warm-up period, the tenor of the wisecracks being that Saperstein was the employer of a bunch of slobs who couldn't beat Public School No. 314 if they had to play basketball as Dr. James Naismith, the game's inventor, intended it to be played.

Al "Runt" Pullins, one of Abe's most dedicated athletes, was highly incensed. "Let's pour it on these wise guys," he said to Saperstein. "They're askin' for it." Abe, who really is a purist at heart, gave his consent. The Trotters cut out the nonsense and waffled the other team, 122–20. And that, remember, was in the days of low-scoring games.

Another night in Atlantic, Iowa, the local gentry made similar unkind remarks about the Trotters' propensity for buffoonery. So once again the boys played it straight, only with a decided switch. They nominated Pullins to do all the shooting. Runt collected thirty-four field goals and seven free throws as the other Trotters passed up easy shots to feed him. Pullins' seventy-five points gave the team an easy victory.

Of course, as pointed out earlier, such outbursts were good for the Trotters' collective souls but hard on Saperstein's booking arrangements. So gradually the team learned to steel itself against the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and stick to the comedy, no matter what. As things turned out, it was their passport to fame.

☆ The New Kind of Basketball

BY THE TIME THE 1929–1930 SEASON ROLLED AROUND, ABE and his boys were traveling in luxury. Instead of one flivver, they now had two. The original vehicle became the "baggage car." The new one, which Abe proudly named the "club car," was practically just off the assembly line—by Globetrotter standards. It had only seventy-nine thousand miles on it.

One night in Montana the team was traveling from Miles City to Glasgow in a blizzard when a recalcitrant clutch stalled the "club car." This wasn't the time or place for repairs, so Abe and four players transferred to the "baggage car," which promptly fetched up in a snowdrift.

"Everybody out and push," ordered Inman Jackson, who was driving. Everybody got out and pushed—except Jackson, whose station as skipper of the "baggage car" outranked Saperstein's at the moment.

By dint of much shoving, the vehicle was released from the drift, and all hands leaped to the running boards. All hands made it except Abe, who lost his footing and went ker-plop in the snow.

"There I was," Abe has said, "on my hands and knees, with the temperature about thirty degrees below zero—and all I could see was that little red taillight getting smaller and smaller as the car went down the road. I thought I was a

goner for sure. But I was lucky. Jackson couldn't see much either, and about three hundred yards from where I lay he ran the car smack into the side of a sheepherder's cabin."

A half hour later, when a deep-frozen Saperstein reached the cabin, he found his players, seven other stranded travelers, the sheepherder—and nine sheep.

"There were fourteen guys and nine sheep in that shack for three days," Abe will tell you with the look of a man who smells something. "When people remark that I've got a soft racket with the Globetrotters I ask them if they've ever inhaled for three days in a twenty-by-fourteen room with fourteen guys and nine sheep."

Once, at Princeton, Minnesota, the Trotters played in a freshly painted hall. Because of the paint odor the windows had to be left open, although it was fifteen below zero outside. Everyone, including the fifteen customers, nearly froze.

Then there was the night in Wheatland, Iowa, when the Trotters played in the hayloft of somebody's barn. This wasn't unusual, inasmuch as the team was accustomed to playing in such improbable places as church basements, livery stables and the so-called opera houses found in many small towns in the Midwest at the time. At Chinook, Montana, they even played in a drained swimming pool. To reach the basket at one end it was necessary to run uphill. (Just once, incidentally, I would dearly love to see the Trotters play in a full swimming pool; knowing Saperstein, I wouldn't want to bet that they won't attempt it some day.)

The game at Wheatland was moving along well when some ill-humored member of the local team, miffed by his inability to stop Lester Johnson from scoring, hit Lester amidships and knocked him from here to breakfast.

A big door at one end of the floor had been left open.

Could Lester crash into the wall on either side of the portal? He could not. He remained on course, sailed through the doorway and disappeared into the night. There was a twenty-foot drop to the ground. Clearly, this was a case for the coroner.

Everybody ran downstairs and outside to view the remains. Saperstein was the first to reach the point where the body most likely was to be found. Faintly, but clearly, he heard a plaintive plea:

"Hel-l-lp! Get me out of this mess."

"Sounds like Lester," Abe thought. "But it couldn't be. Maybe it's his ghost."

It turned out that it wasn't a ghost. Lester was very much alive, uninjured, but decidedly unhappy. The farmer who owned the property had his manure pile right under that door.

An impromptu bath at a nearby horse trough made Lester kissing sweet once more. But for the remainder of his career with the Globetrotters he was known to one and all as "Luscious Lester."

Some years after the Lester-in-the-manure-pile incident, the Trotters were playing in another Iowa town, this time in a rickety grange hall, warmed by pot-bellied stoves at either end of the court.

During a scrimmage beneath one basket there issued a shriek from Kid Oliver, normally one of the quietest of Saperstein's employees. Beating furiously at the back of his lap, Kid raced to the water bucket and sat down therein amid a cloud of steam. Seems he had been pushed against a stove, and his pants were smoldering.

After the game, Oliver lodged a complaint with Abe.

"Look, boss," he said, "I like playin' for you and all that. But there's nothin' that says I've got to catch fire for you."

Saperstein soothed Oliver's feelings, if not his blistered stern. "Kid," Abe said, "you're the hottest player I've ever had. Here's a fifty-dollar bonus."

Once, in Shelby, Montana, a character with all the earmarks of a man who had acquired the knack of living well with no visible means of support, approached Abe the day before a game with a proposition.

"It's like this," the character said. "We're right proud of our basketball team. It hasn't lost in three years, and we don't want that record spoiled. So I think you and me ought to do a little business."

"What kind of business?" Saperstein asked, as if he didn't know what the guy meant.

"You know," the character said. "Make it look good, but just forget about winning. There's a nice hunk of change in it for you."

Right then, Saperstein didn't need a nice hunk of change any more than he needed his lungs for breathing purposes. But he looked the guy in the eye (he had to look upward, inasmuch as the character was a head taller than he), and said: "Nothing doing."

The character patted his hip menacingly, and for the first time Abe noticed that he was packing a gun. "This ain't a toy, brother," the guy said. "I've used it before, and I wouldn't mind using it again. Now get this—there's a lot of money around that says you're going to lose tomorrow afternoon. Remember that. If you don't, you're all going to be shipped out of town in boxes."

Exit the character. And enter another man who not only carried a revolver but had a big badge on his chest, just like the sheriff in a cowboy movie. Only this fellow was a sure-nuff sheriff.

"Friend," the sheriff said to Saperstein, "there's a big

rumor around town that your team is going to lose tomorrow's game on purpose."

"Nothing to it," Abe said. "I don't go for deals like that. My ball club plays to win."

"I'm mighty glad to hear that, friend," the sheriff said. "But the odds have changed all over town. You sure you haven't made some arrangement?"

"I make no arrangements like that," Abe snapped.

"Well, now, that's right encouraging," the sheriff drawled. "I would have sworn something was up." He prodded Abe in the chest with a forefinger. "I'm giving you a little piece of advice, friend," he said. "Your team better win—or else."

So there was Abe with a Hobson's choice. The Globetrotters were damned if they did, and damned if they didn't. Saperstein mulled over the situation, keeping it a secret within his ample breast until just before the team went on the floor the next afternoon. Then he gathered the boys about him and gave them a Dutch-uncle talk.

He pointed out that while every mother's son among them might get ventilated by slugs of varying caliber if they won, they also might get hanged if they lost. And death by shooting always is preferable to dancing at the end of a rope. Abe was merely conjecturing, of course, but the boys got the idea. Besides, it is better to be on the side of the law, and in this case the "law," or at least its principal minion, had said they had better win—or else.

"When I finished talking," Abe has remarked, "I would have sworn that I had five white players."

The Globetrotters went out to do or—and this possibility seemed decidedly real—die. Under such conditions you might suppose that no athlete could play his normal game. The Trotters couldn't. They were abnormal that night.

The first eleven shots they made went into the basket as if guided by some helpful Providence. With the score 22–0 against them, the home forces called time. Saperstein looked around. The hall was crowded to the rivet-straining point, and it was easy to detect whose loyalties lay where. Half the crowd was chattering gaily. The other half looked like a bunch of cattle rustlers who are about to stampede the herd and kidnap the rich rancher's daughter.

"Oh, well," Abe thought. "I've had some fun out of this life. But, golly, I *am* a little young to die."

The Globetrotters continued to roll up the score and were leading, 61–33, with one minute to play when Saperstein signaled for a time out. He summoned the team to the bench. This constituted a technical foul in those days, but Abe wouldn't have been disturbed if the referee had awarded the other side a dozen free throws. His only interest was in giving the order for what the battle-front communiques always refer to as an orderly withdrawal.

"Now hear this. You watch me," Abe said. "I'll be watching the time clock. As soon as that second hand gets all the way around, I'll give you a big wave. Run for the dressing room, and don't anybody stop to get dressed. Just pick up your clothes and beat it for the cars."

In case you're interested in a crassly commercial matter at this suspenseful point, be advised that Saperstein had taken the precaution of collecting his guarantee during the halftime intermission. He may have been upset by thoughts of impending doom, but not to the extent that he forgot to claim the honest dollars he had coming to him.

Just as the second hand finished sweeping away the remaining time, Abe waved like Teddy Roosevelt signaling for a charge up San Juan Hill, and the Trotters headed for the dressing room door. No Globetrotter team before or

since ever moved faster. Everything went according to plan. Saperstein and the boys lammed out of town without incurring a single casualty.

They never did find out what the sheriff meant by "or else."

Then there was the night the Globetrotters limped into Atlanta, Georgia, after a long, bumpy ride and began casting about for lodgings in the colored section. Most of the hotels and rooming houses were closed, but finally Abe found a place on Auburn Street. It wasn't much, but it was open.

The sleepy gentleman behind the desk looked at Abe as he signed the register, then looked at the players.

"You gonna stay here, sir?" he asked Saperstein.

"Certainly," Abe said.

"I mean—are you, yourself, gonna stay here?"

"Sure," Abe said. "Anything wrong with that?"

"Oh, no," the clerk said. "Ain't nothin' wrong, far as I'm concerned. Only, we ain't never had a white man stayin' here before."

Saperstein laid down the pen. "Well, you've got one now," he said. "How about our rooms? We're tired."

Abe and the boys got their rooms. Everybody went to sleep in a hurry, but along about dawn there was a banging on Saperstein's door. A couple of officious guys who identified themselves as city detectives came barging in.

"What're you doin' here?" one of them growled, real tough like.

"I *was* sleeping," replied Saperstein. "Why?"

"Don't get smart," the other detective said. "Climb out of that bed and get out of here."

"What for?" Abe inquired.

"Because you don't belong in this section of town, that's

what for," the dick bellowed. "Now get dressed and beat it."

You can't fight City Hall—especially in the Atlanta of twenty years ago, you couldn't. So Abe got out. But not before he gave those detectives a big needle.

"The only reason I can figure for this," he said with a straight face, "is that you cops must be anti-Semitic."

This seems like a good place to bring in the basketball team of the University of the South (Sewanee), circa 1950–1951, made up of white boys from Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee and Florida. If what the bigots say were true, these kids would have been just about the last people in the world—white people, that is—to willingly go on extended tour with the Harlem Globetrotters.

But in the summer of 1951, when the Trotters made a quickie trip through Europe—warming up for the main event the following year—Saperstein decided to take along an American amateur team to play European teams in preliminaries to the Globetrotter games. He invited the Sewanee authorities to send their team abroad with his. The invitation was accepted.

By no stretch of the imagination could Sewanee have been termed the best college team in America that year. There were other, better-known schools which would have jumped at the opportunity to send their teams overseas, with Saperstein paying the freight.

For exactly the same amount of money he spent on the Sewanee team, Abe could have taken some big-name outfit from north of the Mason-Dixon Line, thus playing it safe as far as the possibility of unwelcome incidents was concerned.

When the tour ended, Stanley Frank, who was collecting material for a *True Magazine* article on Saperstein, voiced the unspoken question that had been in the minds of those

who had viewed the project hopefully but with fingers crossed.

Why, Frank asked, had Saperstein deliberately chosen a team from the Deep South?

"Call it my little contribution to better understanding between white and colored people," Abe said. "Look. When I started out with the Globetrotters, my only aim was to make a fast buck. For a long time it was a very slow buck. Then the money started to come in pretty fast.

"You know how it is. You want to do something worth while. What can one little guy do? It seemed to me that taking the Sewanee team with us would do some good. Look how the whole thing turned out."

Gordon M. Clark, director of athletics at Sewanee at the time of the tour, has since passed on, but what he said at the conclusion of the trip belongs in the permanent record:

"We played fifty-seven games in forty cities," Clark remarked, "and relations between our boys and the Globetrotters couldn't have been more cordial. A good many people in Europe commented on the fact that the teams traveled together without friction. The fact seemed remarkable, of course, only to people who have been generally misled about Southern attitudes and manners in this day and age. Our trip was a pleasant and unforgettable experience in every way."

I don't know whether it still is against the law for a white man to stay at a colored hotel in Atlanta. But I do know that those kids from Sewanee are living proof that we are progressing—slowly, perhaps, but progressing nonetheless—toward that time when the only yardstick by which we will measure a man is his behavior as a human being.

Abe Saperstein didn't advance overnight from the flivver and fleabag hotel stage to the station that enabled him to

take a small army on a world tour. In the bleakest days of the depression there were occasions when the Trotters slept in the town jail just to have a roof over their heads. As Al Stump quoted Abe in a *Sport Magazine* article. "We often played three games in two days on one meal consisting of hamburgers."

Gradually, however, the guarantees became a little larger and the crowds slightly bigger. Always, Abe built good will. If the Chamber of Commerce of Horseface Falls were in the midst of a drive for funds to build a community center, Saperstein donated a percentage of his share of the gate. He still does such things, only on a larger scale.

In 1952, for example, he donated a large portion of the receipts for a Trotters' game in Los Angeles to the Mt. Sinai Hospital in that city. "But that wasn't enough—not for Abe Saperstein," Bill Miller, a Los Angeles sports commentator, has said. "The night of the game, Abe borrowed a fountain pen from Danny Thomas, the comedian and movie star, who was master of ceremonies, and wrote his personal check for one thousand dollars as a donation to the charity."

In 1953 Abe gave the hospital an even larger sum. In grateful recognition, the ladies' auxiliary of the institution presented him with a heart-shaped locket, on which was inscribed: "A small heart of gold to a man with a big heart of gold—Abe Saperstein."

Without fanfare Saperstein contributes thousands of dollars annually to charities representing many faiths and races as well as those of a nonsectarian nature. He shrugs off both his charitable works and his disposition to lift the tab wherever he goes. "If Abe had dinner with the Aga Khan, he'd demand the check," Bill Veeck, who has been a friend of Saperstein's for twenty years, has said. "He's the fastest man with a buck I've ever known."

Abe's spending is not entirely uncalculated. "It's better to live rich than to die rich," he often has remarked. "People think I'm nuts when I walk into a high-class restaurant and spend thirty-five dollars for a meal. With me, it's compensation. I remember how tough it was when I was trying to get a break. If I can make people I like happy while I'm having fun myself, that's fine. I'm enjoying myself, and I have a lot of good friends. After all, it's only money."

In the mid-Thirties, Abe increased his squad to seven players, which enabled him to rotate the personnel, thus saving wear and tear still more. Inman Jackson still was with the team, but the other old-timers had stepped down, their places to be filled by younger men. Still to join the team were such stars as Marques Haynes, Ermer Robinson, Nat "Sweetwater" Clifton and the clown prince of them all—Reece "Goose" Tatum—but the ball club Abe had built then was at least the equal of later, more publicized editions.

Moose Krause recalls the first time he met Abe. That was in 1934, when Krause was doubling as the center and business manager of the Minnesota All-Stars at Winona.

"We had no contract for the game," Krause has said. "So at halftime I went to the business office to discuss terms with Abe. The ticket seller was afraid we were going to have an argument on our hands, but when I asked Abe how much his take would be, he said: 'Moose, we always operate on a guarantee of seventy-five dollars with an option of fifty per cent of the gate.' I said that would be all right.

" 'O.K.,' Abe said. 'Count the money and figure it out.' So while our ticket man counted the money, Abe and I sat there, chatting. He never looked around to make sure that we weren't giving him a short count. He accepted his share of the take, which was around a hundred and fifty dollars, without question. It was one of the biggest payoffs he had

received up to that time, but the point was that he trusted us completely. I'll never forget the impression Abe made on me that day."

Saperstein got his first big break in 1939 when he was able to book a series of games in Mexico. Aside from occasional jaunts into Canada, the Trotters never before had been out of this country. The Mexican hayride wasn't exactly a walloping success financially, but it did give substance to the name "Globetrotters." After that, Abe was able to inject such terms as "international favorites" into his pitch for patronage, which helped. Even so, there still were moments when Abe must have wished that he had taken a nice quiet job as a ribbon clerk in Chicago.

Like the time a large wheel in the amateur athletics set-up in this country, who shall be nameless here because he has a low boiling point and a battery of lawyers, summoned Saperstein to his office, picked up a telephone and killed every game Abe had booked in two states. Seems the gentleman's sensibilities had been offended by the possibility that unsuspecting amateurs might yield to the temptation to play for fun against these nomads who clowned for money.

On the 1938–1939 team were seven players who belong in any "Who's Who" of basketball: Jackson, Louis "Babe" Pressley, Harry Rusan, Bill Ford, Sonny Boswell, Bob Frazier and Ted Strong, a 220-pounder with hands so huge that he could palm the ball like an egg. Strong always was the "pitcher" in the team's baseball routine, because he could wind up and fire a basketball as easily and with nearly as much speed as Robin Roberts throws a baseball. Ted was such an outstanding all-around performer that some veteran coaches still rate him the greatest player in basketball history.

It was after the team's return from Mexico that Saper-

stein ran into the only real prima donna trouble he's ever had. The Globetrotters were scheduled to play the Renaissance team, then regarded as the best in Negro basketball, in a game that had been widely advertised as being for the colored professional championship. Two weeks before the game, four of Abe's players rebelled, demanding a voice in determining the team's policies. Saperstein was stunned. He attempted to reason with the rebels, but they were adamant.

"All right, gentlemen," Abe said finally, "if that's how it is, I think the team would be better off without you."

"Don't try to bluff us," said one of the recalcitrants. "You can't afford to let us go now."

"Can't I?" Abe countered. "As of right now, you're finished."

They were, too. Saperstein canceled the team's bookings for the next ten days, brought in four raw recruits from Detroit and Cincinnati and worked overtime getting the youngsters ready for the Renaissance game. The Rennies beat the Globetrotters by two points in a scorcher.

Eventually, the four rebels came back, considerably subdued, and asked Abe for another chance. Typically, he gave it to them. He is, and always has been, the five-star general of basketball's greatest show (the Trotters refer to him as "Little Caesar" when he is out of earshot), but he's also—to twist an old line—a velvet fist in an iron glove.

During the world tour one of the Trotters went overboard in the matter of spending money. He left more funds abroad than the Marshall Plan, drawing against future pay checks. Inasmuch as I was the paymaster, I can report that at least twenty foreign nations must have regained their economic stability as a result of this fellow's freedom with a buck. Toward the end of the trip, the same player began demanding little personal services that none of the others got

or expected. Abe stood just so much. Then he handed the player his release, effective at the end of the tour.

"I'm fed up," Saperstein told me. "This fellow has spent more money than he'll earn for the next six months. I'm through with him."

"Want to bet?" I said. "I've heard you talk like this before. You'll take him back one of these days."

"No, I won't," Abe insisted. "This time I'm going to stick to my guns."

Before the 1952–1953 season opened the player was back with the Trotters. His wife had telephoned Abe, tearfully asked that her husband be given a break she admitted he didn't deserve and promised that he would cease acting up. The player has been on his best behavior ever since.

In 1940, the sponsors of the world's professional basketball championship tournament held in Chicago discovered at the next to the last minute that another team was needed to fill out the field. More as a measure of desperation than anything else they invited the Globetrotters. So, just a little more than thirteen years after Saperstein had gone afield with his brave band, the Trotters were playing for the world's championship in Chicago Stadium.

The Trotters did very little clowning in the tournament. They played it straight and won, defeating the Chicago Bruins in the final round, 31–29.

You might think that, after that, Saperstein had it made. He had a team that not only was able to make people chuckle but now was the undisputed professional champion of the world. And in 1941 he acquired for his team one of the greatest single attractions any sport ever has known—Goose Tatum, a man who combines athletic ability with a talent for making people not only laugh but nearly bust a gusset in so doing. More—much more—about the Goose

later. For now, suffice it to say that Abe pays Tatum $40,000 a year and figures he's getting a bargain.

But America's entrance into World War II delayed the Trotters' ascendancy. Tatum and other stars went into the service, and Saperstein got along with over-age destroyers, youngsters and physical rejects. The Trotters now were able to get into the larger arenas, usually as participants in doubleheaders which also involved teams of both the American and National Leagues, but it wasn't until the war ended and Abe was able to build a ten-man unit around Tatum that the club hit the jackpot.

It was 1947—the Trotters' twentieth anniversary year —when the club really caught the public fancy. Saperstein can't explain why it happened then, or why it took so long for the customers to get hep, for the Trotter routine was the same in 1947 as it had been since Abe first instructed the boys to strive for both baskets and belly laughs.

"We were like Arthur Godfrey," is the way Saperstein always tries to sum it up. "Arthur always has been a great entertainer, but he had to plug for years before he finally clicked. When he clicked, you know what happened. Well, we played along with middling success until 1947, then—boinng!—we're famous."

One event in 1947 remains particularly bright in Saperstein's memory. In 1927, the first game the Globetrotters played beyond the city limits of Chicago was in the town of Hinckley, Illinois, against the local high school team.

Twenty years later, a group of Hinckley residents called upon Abe and asked him to bring the Globetrotters back and play another game for old times' sake. Some of the men who had played against the first Trotters now had sons playing on the high school team. The committee thought it would be fun if the Trotters would play one

short period against the old boys and another period against the younger generation.

"So we did," Abe has said, "and they put on a real shindig for us. It was the sort of thing that can happen only in a little country town. The whole community turned out to greet us. We had a ball game, an old-fashioned country barbecue and a party. It sure took me back."

In 1949, Abe took the Globetrotters on a tour of Army bases in Alaska. This was the first group of professional athletes ever to tour the Territory, and the Trotters did it in a hurry, playing fourteen games in five days. One of the stops was the tiny village of Metlakahtla (population 107), on the only slightly larger island of Annette. The entire population met the team at the seaplane anchorage. Abe surveyed the group.

"What is this—an Indian camp?" he asked. It was, he was told. All but two of the residents—a white trader and the U. S. Indian Agent—were Metlakahtla Indians. And the team the Trotters were to play was made up entirely of Indians.

The game was played in a pavilion on a floor so glazed with wax that the Trotters slipped and skidded continually. The Indians seemed to have no difficulty maintaining balance. Something had to be done in a hurry, and Abe did it.

"I got some towels and soaked them in vinegar," he reported. "I placed the towels along the sidelines and when our boys ran by they would step on them. The vinegar cut the wax, and somehow we managed to remain upright."

That, incidentally, was one game in which the Trotters failed to make the spectators laugh. Silence was thick as mustard over the crowd, and for a time Abe thought his team was laying a very large egg. He learned later that the

Metlakahtlas consider it bad manners to make noise that might distract the participants in any sort of contest. "It was weird," Abe has said. "After listening to crowd noises for years, our guys nearly scared themselves to death, playing in almost complete silence."

By 1950, the Globetrotters were the undisputed No. 1 attraction in sports. Owners of franchises in the National Basketball Association, the major league of the sport, which had been formed by a merger of the Basketball Association of America and the National League, found that by booking the Trotters to appear in their arenas several times each season they could pack the place every time. Saperstein himself came up with another gimmick: since the conclusion of the 1949–1950 college basketball season, he has gathered together the outstanding college seniors throughout the nation, many of them All-Americans, each year and taken them on a coast-to-coast tour, playing the Globetrotters in the "World Series of Basketball." Pitted against the cream of each season's collegiate crop, the Globetrotters have won all four of the World Series played thus far. The 1953 tour, during which twenty-one games were played, grossed more than $1,100,000 in nineteen days.

Imitation is supposed to be the sincerest form of flattery, and H. L. Mencken has written that you're famous when somebody imagines that he is you. If so, Saperstein has been flattered mightily in recent years and he is famous. At least two teams have gone into business under the name "Globetrotters," their publicity releases implying that they are the genuine article. Saperstein has gone to court to stop these infringements on his team's name, but scarcely a season goes by without some outfit's attempting to cash in on the fame and good will built up by Abe and his boys through the years. As they say in the advertising business, beware of

imitations. Only Saperstein's employees have *"Original* Harlem Globetrotters" emblazoned on the front of their jerseys.

I could give you a recital of the attendance records the Trotters have established throughout this nation and others, but it would take from now until Michaelmas. Each year, of late, they have played before a total of more than three million cash customers. If you had to single out from all the great crowds the Trotters have drawn those that were most significant, it seems to me that two gatherings in New York City in 1951 were the greatest tributes to Saperstein and his outfit.

First, remember that the Globetrotters were billed as "world champions" for only one season—1940–1941. It was a temporary tag, which was permitted to lapse a long time ago, because it is more profitable to travel the exhibition trail than to bear down continually in defense of a championship. Today the Globetrotters don't claim to be champion of anything, and Saperstein will tell you with disarming candor that he doesn't have the best team in the world. I'd venture the opinion, however, that if the Globetrotters cut down their schedule and concentrated on certain games they could knock the spots off any other professional team on a given night. And I'm not alone in that thought.

"I'm always amazed by the Trotters' ability to combine comedy with absolutely top-flight basketball," Howie Dallmar, the University of Pennsylvania basketball coach, who was one of the professional game's greatest performers in the late Forties, has said. "When a team can do that, it must be terrific. It makes all of us in basketball glad that people in other lands feel as we do about the Globetrotters. In any sport it's difficult to win away from home—and the Trotters are batting a thousand on the road."

The Globetrotters' appeal, of course, is based on entertainment. This has been particularly true in recent seasons because fans, weary of the adding-machine scores run up in most collegiate and professional games, have found that the Globetrotters give them superb ball handling, well conceived plays and defensive maneuvers, in addition to comedy. It's much more fun to watch the ball being worked in toward the bucket by means of clever team play than it is to sit like a spectator at a tennis match, watching two teams race madly back and forth, scoring points with no thought of co-ordination or defense.

But about the New York situation in 1951——

Early in the year, the New York district attorney announced that evidence of mischief among college basketball players had been uncovered. Some of the boys had taken bribes from gamblers either to throw games or to shave points. To throw a game is to lose it on purpose, while shaving points means that, although your team wins, you see to it that the margin of victory is within the point spread established by the gambler with whom you are doing business. It's rotten stuff.

The stink was so bad that the bottom dropped out of basketball, as far as patronage was concerned. So on April 1, 1951, along came the Globetrotters for a game in Madison Square Garden against that year's edition of the College All-Americans. As Red Smith wrote in his syndicated New York *Herald Tribune* sports column, the Globetrotters proved that they were "the only people left in the world who could make basketball a laughing matter." Exactly 17,114 customers laid it on the line that night to see them.

Several months later, basketball was staggering under new and far more damaging blows. It had been revealed

that some of the most prominent members of the University of Kentucky's great team of a few seasons back had been playing footsie with gamblers, and people were walking around asking each other: "Ain't nothin' on the level?" In the language of the wagering set it was six, two and even that no attraction involving basketball possibly could fill the Garden for some time to come.

On October 27, the Globetrotters came to town. Saperstein was unworried about the bleak outlook. "Naturally," he told Red Smith, "we'll pack the joint, even in view of what's happening to basketball around this country." That night the Globetrotters played before 18,331 paying spectators. The turnout speaks for itself.

Abe Saperstein used to have his offices in his hat. Now he has office suites in Chicago and New York. He employs three scouts to comb the nation every winter in search of young players who some day may be able to perform with the Globetrotters. He gets his talent from everywhere. Boyd Buie, a one-armed whiz who was a favorite of the crowds during the world tour, was captain of Tennessee State College's great team a few years ago. Sweetwater Clifton, now starring with the New York Knickerbockers, of the National Basketball Association, but who made part of the world tour with the Trotters, was a first baseman of some promise in the Cleveland Indians' baseball farm system. Goose Tatum was a fancy-fielding but light-hitting first baseman for the Cincinnati Clowns (but naturally!) when Saperstein spotted him and decided to convert him to basketball.

Saperstein supports three farm teams, like those in professional baseball, with which his young hopefuls play to acquire the know-how necessary to be a Globetrotter. One of these units uses the Globetrotter name, playing mainly

in the smaller cities on the Pacific Coast and in the South and Southwest. Now and then, when such a move is considered good public relations, a star or two from the main unit is flown out to play with the Western group. The style of play, of course, is the same, and if you're not looking for name players, it is difficult to detect any difference in the play of the two units.

It costs about five thousand dollars to put a rookie through "school," and only about one out of nine rookies ever winds up with the parent team. The "professors" are former Globetrotters. "Abe has kept his organization tightly knit and always functioning perfectly," Tug Wilson has said. "Throughout the organization you will find players of former years, now too old to play, but who are there because they want to be with Abe, and Abe wants them with him."

And it's not only basketball with Abe Saperstein these days. He takes a vaudeville troupe on the road with the Globetrotters to present shows at halftime. Putting the entire company, including players, on the road, by the way, costs about five thousand dollars a day for food, hotels, transportation and salaries. Putting together the vaudeville shows alone requires long hours of auditions, which Abe himself conducts. He became so enthused over the theatrical angle that he has entered that field as personal manager of entertainers such as Gaby Bruyere, a beauteous French movie star.

When Bill Veeck was operating the Cleveland Indians, it was Saperstein who either arranged or suggested the signing of Satchel Paige (Abe now is Paige's personal manager), Larry Doby, Luke Easter, Orestes Minoso and Harry Simpson by the Cleveland club. Abe always wanted to have a hand in major league baseball, and when Veeck went to Cleveland one of his first deals was to engage Saper-

stein as a scout for Negro players. "Abe Saperstein is one of the best men I ever have met," Larry Doby has said. "He made it possible for me to break into the majors. I wish there were a million like him."

When Veeck became the head of the St. Louis Browns, Saperstein bought stock in that club. He scouts occasionally for the Browns, but generally waits until he gets a comprehensive report from what he calls his "personal scouting staff" before going a-hunting himself.

"In the last twenty-five years," he has said, "I've built up a file of more than a thousand good friends—coaches, athletic directors and guys like that—in every section of the country. When I hooked up with Veeck I wrote to all those fellows, asking them to let us know about any good ball players in their neighborhood. In the first year alone they recommended more than one hundred kids. There never was such a scouting staff in the world."

Just to fill out the record, it should be noted that Abe also owns the Chicago American Giants, of the Negro American Baseball League, and the baseball version of the Harlem Globetrotters. As you probably have gathered, the little guy is a big man.

Two years ago, Columbia Pictures made a movie, *The Harlem Globetrotters,* which did big business throughout the world. Thomas Gomez played the role of Saperstein, complete with bulging waistline, and eleven of Abe's fanciest performers played themselves. I was in the picture, too—for all of ten seconds. They dubbed in a newsreel shot of a Trotters' game, and if you looked sharp, you saw me doing the announcing at the press table.

I went to see the picture seventeen times.

The critics were kind to the movie, not one of them mentioning me, but Saperstein is proudest of a letter he

received from a GI stationed in Japan. "I have just seen your movie," the GI wrote. "I liked it much better than *Death of a Salesman.*"

The picture was so big, in fact, that Columbia has brought out a sequel, *Go Man, Go,* based on the life of Saperstein, and starring Dane Clark. The little man has come a long way since the day he set out into the Great Unknown from Chicago. He has a basketball team that in its first twenty-five years won 4233 games and was beaten in only 260. (There is one tie on the Globetrotters' record because back in 1937 the New York Celtics walked off the floor with two minutes to play and the score 32–32, claiming that they had to catch a train.) He has made a lot of money and even more friends. In many countries of the world he is firmly regarded as the "father of basketball."

Abe has come such a long way, in fact, that he thought nothing of picking up a telephone one memorable night (his monthly telephone, telegraph and cable bills, incidentally, average more than three thousand dollars) and waking a peaceable citizen to tell him:

"This is the silver anniversary year of the Globetrotters, and we're going to celebrate by trotting around the world. And, Zink—you're going with us."

This is where I came in.

☆ *London Meets "Sweet Georgia Brown"*

WE WERE TO BEGIN THE TOUR ON MAY 31ST. THE RENDEZvous point was Idlewild Airport, which is said to be located just outside the City of New York. This I doubt. I suspect it is closer to the District of Columbia, judging by the time it took to get there in a cab from Times Square. Or else I was too punchy from just about every hypodermic injection known to medical science and the omnipresent thought that I had forgotten something.

Then there was the awe-inspiring majesty of my title. I had known Abe Saperstein since 1949, but not so well as to be able to figure out his motives in listing me on the tour roster as (and this is complete):

"General manager-traveling secretary-announcer-transportation manager-room reservation clerk-treasurer."

The night before our departure I checked in at the Paramount Hotel in New York, one floor of which Abe had converted into a mustering area for his little army, and sought out the boss.

"What's the idea?" I asked. "You've got me down to do everything but wash the uniforms. No one man could do all those jobs and have enough time left to sleep."

"There, there, Zink," Abe said soothingly. "*You* can do those things with ease. You'll not only have enough time to

sleep, but you'll have enough time to go sight-seeing and absorb the local culture wherever we go. Wait and see."

I never found time to wait and see. I was too involved in being general manager-traveling secretary-etc. If I absorbed any local culture it must have been by osmosis. I even carried one item all the way around the world with me and never removed it from its wrapper—a pair of bathing trunks.

The trunks, a polychromatic number that would have looked good even on Two-Ton Tony Galento, were given me by a friend who suggested that inasmuch as we would be visiting such play spots as the French Riviera and Waikiki Beach, I could wear them to impress the natives. When we got back to the United States I returned the trunks to the donor—unwet and unused. At one time or another—and in most cases, many times—everybody in the troupe had gone swimming. Except the general manager-traveling secretary-etc. He had been too busy.

I had spent Memorial Day announcing a doubleheader between the Phillies and the New York Giants at Shibe Park, in Philadelphia. During the second game I told the crowd that this was my last go-round of the season, because on the morrow I would be leaving New York with the Globetrotters. "And so," I concluded, "this is Dave Zinkoff, saying, with reluctance, so long, and thanking you for your kind attention."

It would add a nice touch had I seen some fan wiping a tear from his cheek, but the only fan I saw with a hand anywhere near his cheek was brushing a fly from it.

It was with a feeling of elation that I packed my bag for the trip. (A feeling of elation, one hundred cakes of hotel-size soap, nylon shirts and underwear, one extra suit, a bolt of chintz for an Italian sports promoter whose wife

prefers chintz to chianti, several boxes of nylons in assorted sizes for good-will gestures as needed, and a dozen jars of soluble coffee.) My visa, like all the others, had been arranged through the U. S. Department of State, and about all I had to do on the Big Day was show up at the airport.

I was the greenhorn of the party. Most of the others had just returned from a six-weeks tour of seven countries of South America, and I heard several pointed suggestions as to what should be done with some of the cities in which the troupe had performed. But Europe, the Near East and Asia lay ahead, and it was with bright and shining faces that we boarded a Pan-American World Airways plane and set out to make like Magellan.

In the party were twenty-nine persons of varying sizes and shapes. Let's examine the Globetrotter personnel first:

Bill "Rookie" Brown, from Asbury Park, New Jersey, who had played the romantic lead in the movie *The Harlem Globetrotters,* and had proved to be as able an actor as he is a basketball player; the veteran Babe Pressley, a Cleveland product; Parnell Woods, another Clevelander; Boyd Buie, from Pine Bluff, Arkansas, the only one-armed player in major professional basketball; Clarence Wilson, from Horse Cave, Kentucky, by way of Tennessee State College; Joshua Grider, from Kansas City, Missouri, and Tennessee State; J. C. Gipson, a nineteen-year-old first-year man from Los Angeles; Ermer Robinson, from San Diego; Leon Hillard, from Chicago; Lee Garner, another rookie, from Alcorn, Mississippi, and Alcorn College; Pop Gates, from New York, a veteran of the pro basketball wars; Frank Washington, from Philadelphia, another veteran.

Where were Tatum and Haynes? Both had been given permission to join the team later. How much later we didn't know, because in each case the problem was one of illness at

home. Tatum's mother was ailing, as was Haynes' sister. As many a man and woman found out during wartime, it's a frightening thing to have to leave an ailing loved one and go off to the far corners of the earth. So when Tatum and Haynes explained their situations to Abe, the reaction was immediate.

"Stay home until things are under control," Abe said. "Get with us as soon as you can, but not before you're sure everything is O.K. at home."

Traveling with the Trotters, and their opponent in most games played during the tour, was the new version of the New York Celtics, a collection of professional and collegiate players Abe had signed especially for the trip. Some writers have been wont to refer to the Celtics and other clubs that play the Globetrotters game after game as "stooges" and "trained seals," but if there was any stooge-ing done during the trip, I didn't see it.

You wouldn't exactly call a team made up of players like these a pushover:

Claude Overton, from McAlester, Oklahoma, and East Central Oklahoma State Teachers College; Tony Lavelli, from Somerville, Massachusetts, and Yale, who doubled as an accordionist in the halftime intermission shows; Reds Klotz, from Philadelphia, an old pro; Joe Lyles, from St. Louis, and St. Louis University; Bob Clark, from Huntington, Indiana, one of basketball's famous team of "Clark Twins"; Bob Luksta, from Cicero, Illinois, and DePaul University; Ronnie MacGilvary, a youngster from Floral Park, New York, who had played for St. John's University the previous season and had been voted the most outstanding New York metropolitan area player to perform in Madison Square Garden.

There were four entertainers, besides Lavelli: Hadda

Brooks, a singer, who was to stand the normally staid British on their heads; Sally Baudendistal, a dancer; and a young married couple, Les and Beverly Farris, who can cut as many capers on a trampolin as the Globetrotters can pull off on a basketball floor. This was the core of the entertainment unit, with other acts scheduled to join the troupe in Europe.

That accounts for twenty-three wayfarers. The other six made up what, for want of a better term, might be called the Brains Department: Abe Saperstein; Walter Kennedy, the Trotters' public relations director; Elliot Hasan and Cy Kaselman, a pair of referees; Eddie Gottlieb, owner-coach of the Philadelphia Warriors, of the National Basketball Association, who was going along for part of the European leg of the trip; and the general manager-traveling secretary-etc.

This I must tell you. During the weeks immediately preceding my departure from Philadelphia there was an appreciable amount of comment in the city's newspapers regarding my going. Hugh Brown, of the *Bulletin,* wrote a whole column about Gottlieb, Kaselman and me. Frank Brookhouser, then with the *Inquirer,* and Johnny Webster, another *Inquirer* columnist, gave me a whirl. Lanse McCurley, sports editor of the *Daily News,* worked me over, but good. And when Max Kase, sports editor of the New York *Journal American,* gave me a mention, I was in the proverbial seventh heaven.

As I am not exactly a publicity-shy creature, my boyish head was turned by such attentions. This set me up for a telephone call I received one afternoon.

"This is Mallinson, of *Life Magazine,*" a voice said. "Would it be possible for me to see you before you leave on the world tour with the Harlem Globetrotters, Mr. Zinkoff? It's important."

Ah, I thought. At last, true fame. *Life* knows that I'm going abroad with the Trotters. Probably they want me to do a story on my adventures. Or maybe they want to do an article on *me*.

I turned on the charm. "I think I could give you a little time, Mr. Mallinson," I said. "Just what do you have in mind?"

"A very important matter, Mr. Zinkoff. I'd like you to renew your subscription to *Life* before you leave."

I was going to write a nasty letter to the editors of *Life,* but I found out that "Mr. Mallinson" was a guy who had been put up to giving me a rib by Abe Saperstein.

Anyway, we boarded the plane with a minimum of fanfare, which was somewhat disappointing to me, as I had figured this would be something like departing from New York by boat with bands playing, flags waving and pretty girls throwing kisses. My Uncle Sollie took a boat trip from New York once, and that is how he said it was. But we just walked up the steps, checked in with the stewardess and sat down in the plane.

Pretty soon somebody hollered: "Here we go!" We went.

When everyone had settled down, Abe announced that there was a speech to be made. "I'll be with you most of the time," he said, "but there will be occasions when I'll have to fly back to the States to attend to business. Zink here will be with you all of the time, and since he'll have most of the headaches, I want him to tell you where he stands."

I astounded myself. I made a short address.

"We're all adults," I said, "and we know the score. Remember just one thing, will you? We're going to be together for four months. We're going to get on each others' nerves at times, but let's not work up any feuds. When you get angry at the other guy, blow your top at him. Then, after



The "net game" in London



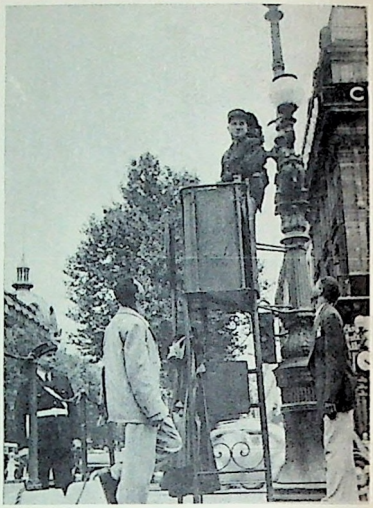
. . . and on to Paris



Sugar Ray Robinson dons a uniform





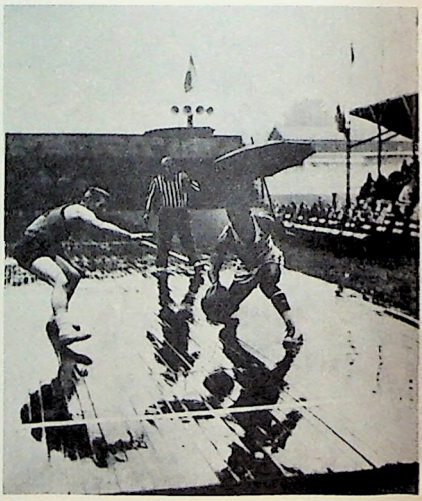




We see and are seen

. . . sometimes in the wet





Flight to Brussels



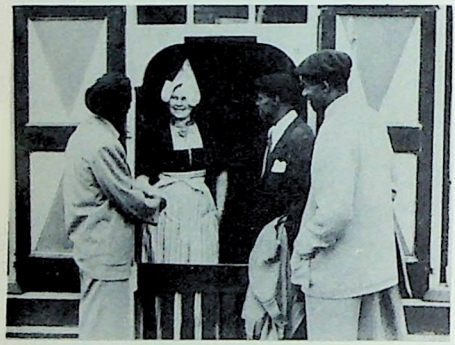
Tatum's hat trick
in Luxembourg



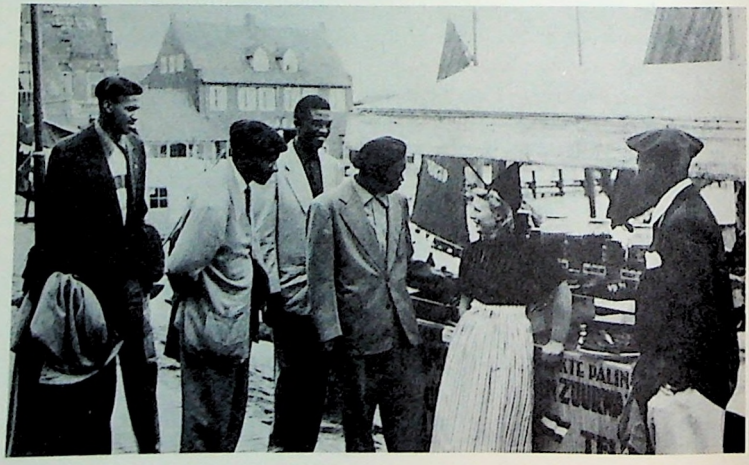


The game attracts new friends,
including a woman boxing promoter





A day off in Amsterdam



you've cooled down, apologize and forget it. That way, we'll all stay happy."

You think it's easy to set up a round-the-world tour involving two basketball teams and a troupe of entertainers? Then try on a few of these items for size:

1. Transportation alone cost nearly two hundred thousand dollars. Pan-American and co-operating agencies throughout the world had been laying out the travel schedule for almost a year before the tour.

2. Rates of monetary exchange in the various countries had to be considered, and special dispensations had to be made to enable Saperstein to bring funds out of most of them.

3. A seven-ton, hundred-and-fifty-section hardwood floor had to be shipped overseas for use in cities where no basketball courts existed. A month prior to our departure the floor was sent by boat to Marseilles, France, to be used throughout Europe, then to be shipped to Hong Kong, for use there and in Formosa and Japan.

4. After playing in Rome, we were to travel exclusively by air. But for most of our jumps in Europe we were to get about in two big buses Abe had purchased and shipped to Marseilles. To add a touch of class (that's the way Abe put it) to the entourage, Saperstein also sent his Cadillac—a bright red, 1952 model—to Europe as an auxiliary vehicle. Some auxiliary! In Paris it attracted more attention than the Folies Bergère.

5. Each player was permitted eighty-eight pounds of luggage, including his playing equipment. Each man carried three basketball uniforms, a warm-up jacket and at least three pairs of shoes.

Most of the advance work was done by Harry Hannin, who seldom gets his name in the newspaper stories about the

Globetrotters but is a vital cog in the organization. Remember the World War II story about the Marines who stormed ashore on an island, figuring on a rough time with the enemy? But there on the beach was a Seabee who asked the first Marine to reach him: "What took you so long, Mac?" Harry Hannin is the Seabee of the Globetrotter organization. He goes into a city a week or so ahead of the team, makes certain that playing conditions will be up to standard, sees to it that hotel reservations are in order, then butters up the sports editors of the newspapers. He hasn't had to do much buttering-up in recent years, now that the Trotters are the hottest article in sports, but he continues to drop in on the editors anyway. In this regard, Saperstein and his staff have an unwritten rule: "Be nice to the people who helped you on the way up, because without them the climb to the top would have been much more difficult."

Our first stop on the initial leg of the flight was Gander, Newfoundland, where we got out to stretch our legs. We were hanging around the airport, doing nothing in particular, when through the amplifying system boomed an announcement:

"Mr. Zinkoff. Mr. David Zinkoff, of Philadelphia. Please call your psychiatrist immediately."

Elliot Hasan was the perpetrator of that one. I have been distrustful of basketball referees ever since.

The flight from Gander to Shannon, Ireland, was uneventful, except that at the Shannon airport Walter Kennedy did what any Irish-American could be expected to do. He got down and kissed the Ould Sod. We tarried only momentarily in Shannon, then headed for London, and at 3:10 P.M., London time, on June 1, the Harlem Globetrotters were at the scene of their first stand on the first round-the-world junket in basketball history.

We were scheduled to play six games in as many nights at the Empire Pool and Sports Arena, a magnificent structure adjoining Wembley Stadium, where the 1948 Olympic Games were held, on the outskirts of the city. The Pool seats nine thousand persons, and is the chameleon of British sports arenas.

As the name implies, it is basically a huge indoor swimming pool. But in a matter of hours the pool can be drained and covered by a floor. Since 1934, when it was opened, the Pool has been the scene of many of the British Empire's great indoor sports events. But not until 1950 was basketball played there.

In that year, Saperstein took the Globetrotters to London for a three-game stand that was part of a tour of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and North Africa. He got into the Empire Pool against the better judgment of Sir Arthur J. Elvin, managing director of the Pool and Stadium.

"Basketball in this country was regarded as more or less a girls' game," Sir Arthur has said. "It was called 'net ball,' and had no substantial spectator following. But to please an American friend, Phil Shepard of Chicago, who insisted that the Globetrotters would draw, I agreed to give Mr. Saperstein a trial run.

"To my surprise, the Globetrotters were an instant success. In 1951, we brought them back for six nights, and here again the story was capacity houses for all performances.

"Abe Saperstein will go down in British sporting history as the man who made Britain basketball conscious. And, incidentally, Mr. Saperstein and I never have had any kind of a contract. He is one of the few persons I know with whom I am happy to do business without even a letter."

The London newspapers had been giving us a big play for weeks, and one of the first things we had to attend to

after checking in at our hotel was a request from the British Broadcasting Corporation for permission to televise the first game. Abe got in touch with Sir Arthur, learned that the Pool was sold out for all six nights, and gave his O.K. Then he held a press conference.

A British press conference isn't like one of ours. It's a polite, restrained affair, with little of the byplay that takes place when reporters interview a prominent sporting figure in this country. For a British sports writer to ask some of the pointed questions our writers ask would be considered "cheek" and decidedly unsporting.

This conference went along quietly, with the writers asking such questions as "Do you expect Mr. Tatum will arrive in time to perform in London?" and "How do you think our football chaps compare with your men in stamina?" Finally, one of the reporters commented favorably on the necktie Abe was wearing.

It was a "Globetrotter" tie, a blue cravat with a figure of one of the Trotters woven into it in red and white. "You like it?" Abe asked. The writer said he did. Abe untied it and handed it to the man.

"Here, take it," he said. "Just be sure to wear it whenever you report one of our games."

Abe is a nonsmoker and a teetotaler. He is, on the other hand, a peppermint addict. He carries a supply of mints with him wherever he goes, and he was the darling of those British writers. Sweets were rationed in Britain at the time, but during our stay Saperstein saw to it that no reporter with whom he came in contact was without peppermints.

The Empire Pool was packed to the rafters when the Globetrotters and the Celtics took the floor for the opening game of the tour. Even in the restaurant section overlooking the arena, where well-heeled spectators can dine while

watching the action below, the customers got to their feet and roared a welcome as the Trotters burst through a huge paper hoop with a picture of a Globetrotter painted thereon and ran onto the court.

The Trotters formed their famous eight-man circle on one half of the court and began whipping the ball around to the rhythm of a recording of "Sweet Georgia Brown." It's a now-you-see-it, now-you-don't caper, during which the ball moves so rapidly that it is difficult to follow. It never fails to set American crowds to howling. It panicked the British. When the circle broke and the players moved to one basket to take warm-up shots, the crowd applauded thunderously and shouted: "Well played, chaps! Encore! Encore!"

The telecast by the BBC went on the air at 8:30 P.M. while the boys were doing the circle routine, and there must be a goodly segment of the British population that believes such carryings-on are part and parcel of basketball as played everywhere. We received hundreds of letters as a result of the telecast, most of them inquiring as to the whys and wherefores of the circle. (And who had the job of answering those letters? You guessed it—the general manager-traveling secretary-etc.)

Because the actual game was started late, the BBC carried only twelve minutes of play. When the telecast ended, we were told later, the BBC was flooded with telephone calls from irate viewers who demanded to know why in the name of Yorkshire pudding the game couldn't have been carried to its conclusion.

The Globetrotters won, 38–32, and the halftime entertainment was a solid click. Jacques Cordon, a Belgian unicyclist, had joined the troupe, and he and the others kept the crowd in good spirits during what the British call the

"interval." Tony Lavelli made a big hit with his accordion playing. One of the writers at the press table remarked that "American athletes are generally thought to be merely muscle men, but here is a man who is both an athlete and a genuine artist." The show was run with the dispatch Saperstein demands. No Broadway production has better timing. Everything is done on cue, and the men operating the spotlights have cue sheets from which to work in blending the colors of the lighting.

The following day the London writers went into ecstasies about the Globetrotters. Some sample quotes: "America's greatest ambassadors of good will . . ." "Amazing, uncanny, thrilling—the finest sporting spectacle in the world . . ." "No, Aunt Agatha, this isn't anything like the net ball at your girls' school; in fact, it isn't like anything you've ever seen." One writer described my announcing as "definitely American in idiom, but quite entertaining nevertheless." I've never been able to figure out whether that's a rap or a pat.

That night Saperstein arrived at the Pool only a few minutes before game time, having been delayed in traffic downtown. The "House Full" sign was up, and as Abe approached the gate an attendant said: "Sorry, sir. No seats left."

Abe dead-panned it. "That so?" he said. "This fellow Saperstein must be doing all right." The attendant shook his head.

"Saperstein? Saperstein? Never heard of him, sir. We've got the Harlem Globetrotters on tonight."

Abe walked to another gate to identify himself and gain admission. He didn't want to embarrass that attendant.

Throughout the week the Trotters played to turn-away houses. One night on the Wembley parking lot there were

one hundred and seventy-eight buses from within a two-hundred-and-fifty-mile radius of London. Scalpers attempted to gobble up tickets for resale at the usual profit, but had little success. Nearly everyone with a ticket wanted to use it himself.

The Trotters won four consecutive games from the Celtics, and on the fifth night the program was changed. In a doubleheader the Globetrotters beat the U. S. Air Force team from the Lakenheath Air Base, and the Celtics whipped the USAF team from the Ruislip Air Base. That was the night Lester Ferguson, a Philadelphian who remained in England after World War II and became one of the singing idols of the British, was our guest. After the game we went to a London supper club, where Fergy and Hadda Brooks teamed up in an impromptu duet. Hadda had been wowing the crowds at the games, and now her appearance with Fergy made her a real big name. Before we left London, Saperstein had arranged for Hadda to fulfill an engagement at the Bagatelle Club. She enjoyed two successful weeks, then joined us in Germany.

On the morning of our last day in London, Abe received a telephone call. "Hey, boss," a voice said. "I got news for you. Goose will not be rationed in England today."

The caller, of course, was Goose Tatum, who had just flown in from New York.

Few things short of the arrival of Harry Truman by parachute could have caused more of a stir in the London afternoon papers. Goose Tatum had arrived. The "Goose will not be rationed" line made every sports page in town. So did "The Golden Goose Flies Tonight." Some of the papers resurrected an old Tatum story by way of welcoming the hero.

The previous year Tatum had checked into London three

days after the arrival of the other Globetrotters. Only that time he had no legitimate excuse. He had missed the plane carrying the Trotters from New York, and for reasons best known to himself hadn't bothered to get aboard another until forty-eight hours later.

When Goose arrived in London he reported to Saperstein. Abe greeted him matter-of-factly. "Glad to see you," Saperstein said. "The such-and-such charity will be glad to know you've turned up. You're fined two hundred and fifty dollars. Make out your check to them."

Tatum shrugged. "O.K., if you say so, boss," he said. "But, gosh, I reckon I'm keepin' that charity in luxury."

To understand Tatum's appeal to people from Manila, Arkansas, to Manila, Philippine Islands, whether or not they know the first thing about basketball, you must realize that Goose is, in the fullest sense of the term, a true clown. Long after he has made his last field goal he will be making people laugh. He is a master of pantomime, and when he goes into his act every little movement has a meaning all its own. Marshall Smith remarked in a *Life* article on Goose that "with a few simple changes in techniques and trappings he could take his place among the funnymen in the Ringling big top and find himself playing to an 'easy-laughing house.' "

This is not to fluff off Tatum's ability as a basketball player. He rates with the best in the game, usually leading the Globetrotters in scoring, and there are coaches who say that if he cut out the clowning and bore down for a full game he could outplay the greatest performers who ever lived on the best nights they ever experienced.

But Goose could no more cease being a clown than he could stop eating. As Al Silverman put it in a *Sport Magazine* story, "in foul shooting, the Goose is much more suc-

cessful when attempting to ring the hoop by bouncing the ball off his head than he is when shooting in the customary way." He eschews the conventional lay-up shot, preferring to send the ball swishing through the cords by means of a sweeping hook shot without so much as looking at the basket. When the Globetrotters pull off the football routine Tatum drop-kicks the ball toward the basket from mid-court—in Tokyo he kicked the ball through the hoop for as neat a goal as ever has been seen anywhere.

No Mississippi river-boat sharpie ever handled a deck of cards more adroitly than Tatum manipulates a basketball. Sometimes when he is the pivot man on the rim of the foul circle he stands like a Statue of Liberty in shorts, his right arm held aloft and the ball spinning on the tip of his index finger. One of his pet capers is to grab a pass under the opposing team's basket, lay the ball on the floor and placidly tie his shoelaces while the enemy converges upon him. When his tormentors arrive he retrieves the ball, goes through a series of contortions that leaves the opposition grasping for air, and drops the ball through the net.

Tatum has the basic equipment of the clown: a charmingly bizarre appearance. He is six feet three inches tall and has Ichabod Crane arms that dangle almost to his knees. By actual measurement he has the longest arm span known in the world—eighty-four and a half inches. He has hands that look like nothing so much as a pair of hams. And he has an expressive face, with large eyes and a set of big, flashing teeth.

During a time out Goose will, with elaborately feigned stealth, go tippy-toe over to the opposing team's huddle and listen in on what is being said. Then he will grin broadly and carefully make his way back to his teammates to inform them of what the enemy has afoot. Sometimes, while the

other Trotters are battling for the ball beneath their basket, Tatum will stroll blithely to the far end of the court and seat himself on some spectator's lap. Then he will borrow a hat from an onlooker, move back onto the court, snag a long pass and score. He returns the hat with a deep bow to the lender and shakes hands with everyone within reaching distance.

Let Goose spot a photographer kneeling at courtside, and he will forget the game momentarily to strike a pose. Or if the referee calls a foul against the Globetrotters and Tatum doesn't agree with the decision, he will borrow a pair of eyeglasses from a spectator and with great ceremony present them to the official.

At least once every game Tatum will fall heavily to the floor after being fouled and, after a suitable delay to impress the crowd with the severity of his injury, will limp to the sideline, ostensibly for repairs. All this to enable him to switch basketballs. He returns to the free throw line, takes careful aim and lofts the ball toward the basket. The players on either side of the foul lane jump for the rebound, but there isn't any. The ball goes only part of the way toward the bucket and, as if smacked by an invisible hand, returns to Tatum's clutching paws. The ball has two rubber bands attached to it.

No one, excepting Tatum himself, knows for certain how old the Goose is. Usually he insists that he is thirty-four but on days when aches and pains afflict him he will admit that he may be a few years older. There are some who maintain that Goose is close to fifty, but who cares? The important thing is to people all over the world, particularly in Europe and Asia, Tatum is the brightest figure in basketball.

Goose was born in El Dorado, Arkansas, and as a boy never played much basketball. He acquired his nickname

because of his ability to soar into the air to pull down passes in touch football, the story being that one day an onlooker remarked: "Look at that ol' Goose fly." He aspired to be a baseball player and by 1941 was the first baseman and Comic No. 1 with the Cincinnati Clowns, one of Negro baseball's high-octane teams. Saperstein saw him play and resolved to convert him into a basketball player. Veteran members of the Trotters despaired of Abe's sanity, but Saperstein recognized in Goose the raw material from which he could fashion a big-name star for his team.

The Army grabbed Tatum away from Abe after one season, but it turned out to be a good break. Goose was stationed at the Air Force base at Lincoln, Nebraska, where the coach of the basketball team was Jake Ahearn, a knowledgeable old pro, who worked energetically with Tatum and helped him develop his now-famous fadeaway hook shot. By the time Goose returned to the Trotters he was a polished performer.

Away from the playing floor, Tatum is pretty much a "loner." He seldom pals around with his teammates, who long ago came to accept this situation, and for all his clowning before the public is a moody, almost morose, person. He dislikes traveling, which is a rough deal for a man who makes his living as a Globetrotter. There were times when he would disappear for days on end, and neither fines nor threats of fines deterred him. Yet he always has been almost fanatically loyal to Saperstein, sometimes at the risk of his physical well-being.

One day in Paris I looked in on Goose and found him in bed, obviously a sick man. I summoned a physician who found that Tatum was running a temperature of 102. "He will be all right in a few days," the doc said, "but he is to remain in bed for at least the next twenty-four hours." That

was it. The game at the Palais des Sports that night would go on without Goose.

But when Abe and I reached the arena, there was Tatum, dressed in his uniform and ready to go on the floor.

"The doctor said to stay in bed, Goose," Abe remonstrated.

"I know," Tatum answered, "but I'm goin' to play. You advertised me here and I wouldn't want to get the people down on you because I didn't play."

"Thanks," Abe said. "But I'd rather have a live Goose than a dead one. Now be a good guy and go back to the hotel."

"I won't do it, boss," Tatum insisted. "You advertised that I was goin' to play, and I'm goin' to play. That's all there is to it."

There was no talking him out of it. Abe used Goose sparingly, and in another day or so Tatum was back on his feed. But Abe never has ceased to marvel at Tatum's attitude that night.

"That man," he has said, "is a contradiction. He'll worry you half to death sometimes over little things. But he'd rather risk his health than endanger the show."

Last spring, during the World Series with the College All-Americans, Tatum kept going in spite of a severe back injury that would have put many another big-name athlete out of action. He had to wear a cumbersome, corsetlike brace and he was in constant pain, but he wouldn't quit. He didn't act heroic about it, either. He simply said that he felt he should play.

Anyway, there was Goose Tatum in London, and the British were happy. That night Goose received an ovation from the Empire Pool crowd, the like of which I never heard before. He didn't start the game, and up in the stands

a leather-lunged spectator kept yelling: "Hey, Sappy! Put the Goose in!" Finally, Abe gave Tatum the word, and in he went. The customers cut loose with a welcome that must have been heard back in Buckingham Palace.

The Globetrotters won again, and we all went back to the hotel to prepare to "break camp." We had played to six capacity houses and Sir Arthur was smiling broadly as he bade farewell to Abe.

"Next year," he said, "I want the Globetrotters for ten nights—from June 3 to June 13. I hope you can arrange it."

"We'll arrange it," Abe said.

Neither Abe nor anyone else in our group realized at the moment how important those dates were to be.

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth was to take place on June 2, 1953. And the ten days Sir Arthur had offered Abe would be the brightest on Britain's sports calendar in many a year, with London bulging at the seams with visitors from all over the world.

As I said, though, we didn't realize all that at the time. We were too busy getting ready to invade the Continent.

☆ *"The Dancers" in France*

WE TOOK OFF FROM LONDON ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 8, bound for Brussels, Belgium, and a playing date in Lille, France, that evening. This was a puzzler to Reds Klotz, of the Celtics, who professed to be mystified as to why we were flying to one country when we were to play in another. It was explained to Klotz that Lille, situated near the Belgian border, was only about an hour's drive from Brussels.

"I still don't get it," Klotz said. "If we're going to play in France, why don't we go there in the first place?"

After about the fifth time around, Tatum grinned at Klotz. "Man," he said, "you're dumb. D-U-M, dumb."

At Brussels we found the buses that had been shipped from the States, as well as Saperstein's Cadillac. The buses were painted red, white and blue, and on the sides of each was lettered: "HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS—Magicians of Basketball." The seats were comfortable, there was ample room for baggage—in short, these were vehicles that the first Globetrotter team would have given a month's pay to have. The Cadillac was practically factory-new, with only 2625 miles on its speedometer. "Doesn't this remind you of your old 'club car'?" I asked Abe.

"Yeah," he replied. "The way filet mignon reminds me of hamburger."

If the Globetrotters created a sensation in Europe, that

Cadillac caused one only slightly less pronounced. Every time Saperstein parked the car a crowd would gather to inspect it. Peter Lind Hayes and his wife, Mary Healy, the movie, television and night club stars, were in Paris when we were there, and they still talk about the impact made on the Parisians by the Caddie.

"We'd be walking down the street," Hayes has said, "and we'd see a crowd up ahead. Traffic would be at a standstill and people would be milling around as though there were a fire or something. It invariably turned out to be Abe Saperstein's automobile."

At the border I had the first attack of what was to be one of my major headaches. Our buses were to be driven by citizens of whatever country we happened to be in, in accordance with an international arrangement throughout Europe. On this continent, a bus driver could start in Canada and jockey his vehicle through the United States and into Mexico without difficulty, providing, of course, that his papers were in order. But in Europe it is necessary to change drivers whenever you go from one country into another. Our Belgian drivers barely had time to get acquainted with the buses before we reached the French border and a couple of Frenchmen took over.

This rule doesn't apply to smaller vehicles, so the Cadillac zipped through with only the usual customs check-up. In the Caddie were Abe, Tatum, Frank Washington, Elliot Hasan, Eddie Gottlieb and the general manager-traveling secretary-etc. This asignment was to be fairly permanent, although except in the cases of Saperstein, who naturally rated riding in his own automobile, and Tatum, whose stomach does flip-flops when he rides in a bus, I've never figured out how or why Abe arrived at it.

At Lille, the Globetrotters beat the Celtics, 29–24, and

then the caravan headed for Gay Paree. Here and there along the highway we saw the Communist-inspired "Go Home, Americans" and "Go Back to U.S., Ridgway" (meaning General Matthew B. Ridgway, head of the NATO forces) signs which later popped up profusely in Italy and Germany. Whether we are willing to admit it or not, we Americans are not loved generally abroad. We have spent a lot of money, and we mean well, but we simply haven't gotten across to most of the average citizens.

And that's where I think the Harlem Globetrotters did a job. They not only made the average guy laugh, which is important in itself, but they did something even more vital: they knocked one of the Communists' principal propaganda gimmicks for a loop.

Throughout Europe and Asia the Communists rant about the white capitalistic imperialists in the United States who, they say, aim to conquer and subjugate all colored peoples everywhere. Their line has it that in America the Negro is exploited and held in bondage. It's the usual propaganda approach: tell a lie forcefully, tell it often enough, and it's accepted as gospel truth.

But along came the Globetrotters, well dressed and obviously well fed. Wherever they went, they traveled first class. They lived in the best hotels and ate in the finest restaurants. Always they behaved like what they are—gentlemen. People who paid to see them play witnessed a group of average Americans making a good living by having fun. And if that didn't do more to help the cause of America abroad than all the propaganda broadsides we have fired without troubling to take good aim, then I don't know anything about human nature.

None of the Trotters made speeches about freedom or the dignity of man. Tatum and the rest simply went their

normal ways and, by so doing, refuted the Communist claim that the American Negro is a hat-in-hand, Uncle Tom type of person. The Commies themselves knew they were licked on this point. In both Paris and Rome, where flourish more left-wing newspapers than anywhere else this side of the Iron Curtain, those papers gave the Trotters what, for them, amounted to rave notices.

Ken Opstein, former International News Service sports writer and now press attaché of the U. S. Embassy in Rome, told Saperstein: "The Red press in Europe pours out propaganda about the American Negroes being slaves. But when people see the Globetrotters, they realize the Red propaganda is a lot of hogwash."

The State Department has taken official cognizance of the Globetrotters' contributions to better understanding of the United States abroad. After the Trotters' first trip to Europe, Saperstein received a letter from the State Department.

"The Globetrotters," it read, "have proven themselves ambassadors extraordinary of good will wherever they have gone. On any future tours, please call on the State Department of the United States of America for any help we can give."

In Paris we checked into the Claridge Hotel, and almost immediately I became the most popular man in the party. Remember those hundred cakes of hotel-size soap I took with me? I was the butt of numerous wisecracks when I mentioned them on the day of departure (sample from Leon Hillard: "Man, you must *really* be dirty!"), but the Zink knew what he was doing. I didn't spend five years in the Army and learn nothing. With my two little eyes I had read about the soap shortage in Europe and Asia, and I went prepared.

Now the Claridge is one of Europe's finest hostelries. (It

should be, at twenty-five dollars a day per person.) But, like most other such establishments on the Continent, it was operating on a short supply of soap. My bathroom was large enough to house several trucks, and on the racks were—by actual count—fourteen towels. But there wasn't a shred of soap to be had. The same situation obtained with the others in our group. So pretty soon, my telephone began to ring. "Hey, Zink," somebody would say, "how about borrowing a little soap from you?" Or, "You're doing everything else on this trip, so how's about giving me a cake of your soap?" I am proud to say that I did my part to keep the boys supplied with some of the essentials.

We opened at the Palais des Sports, which has been called the "Madison Square Garden of France," the next night. The place was jammed. More than fifteen thousand spectators, who paid a total of 6,100,000 francs (about $17,500) for a record one-night take, sat patiently as the Celtics walloped a team representing Paris, then nearly tore the roof off when the Trotters came out to play the French Olympic team. Only the French don't call the Trotters by that name. Throughout France they are known as the "dancers." This tag was hung on them by the Paris sports writers in 1951, because the Globetrotters impress the artistic French as being ballet masters.

Naturally, the spectators regarded this contest as one of international importance, and while it was obvious to anyone knowledgeable in basketball matters that the French Olympians would be outgunned, there was an air of optimism throughout the arena. The French Basketball Federation had arranged the game, and the feeling was that if the French team could beat the Trotters it would give them a big lift for the upcoming Olympic Games. The French tried hard and played well enough to beat many American college

teams, but the Trotters won, 62–46. One of the French players, Mark Quibbler, from Lyon, impressed all of us as being potential American basketball timber.

I had a guest at the game: Annabelle Mitchell, an American girl stationed with the United States Embassy in Paris. During World War II I spent nearly three years as a GI in Iceland, and Annabelle was a Red Cross field worker there. We had a big time, cutting up touches about the old days, and after the game I introduced Miss Mitchell to Abe.

"Where are you from?" Abe asked her.

"A little town in California," she replied. "You never heard of it. The name is Willetts."

"Willetts?" Saperstein said. "Of course I've heard of it. I spent the night of March 3, 1940, there when I missed a plane connection." And he proceeded to name the principal streets of the community. Saperstein has an almost encyclopedic memory for dates, places and people. All during the tour, when Americans—particularly GI's—engaged him in conversation, Abe astounded them by reeling off facts and figures about their home towns. Possibly it had been twenty or more years since he last was in some particular community, but he mentioned street names, population and the names of newspapermen in the town like a train announcer intoning the stops of the 5:40 out of Grand Central.

The second night in Paris another capacity crowd showed up. The newspapers had done nip-ups about both the basketball and the halftime show, and the French had taken with good grace the walloping their Olympic hopefuls had been given by the Trotters. "When you are beaten by the world's greatest artists of basketball, it is no disgrace," a Paris writer at courtside told me. So the Celtics proceeded to get in their licks, beating the Olympians, after which the Globetrotters clowned it up while swamping the Paris team,

71–45. Among the most interested of the spectators were the members of the Russian Olympic team, who were en route to Helsinki, Finland, for the Games. Abe had been trying for two years to get permission to take the Globetrotters into Russia, principally because he was burned by the Communist charge that the Globetrotters had made a travesty of "the Russian game of basketball," and now he attempted to do the next best thing.

He went to the official in charge of the team. "We have one more game here," he said. "We're booked to play the Celtics tomorrow night, but we'll make a change if your team will play us. We'll give you any monetary guarantee you ask, within reason. If you're going to play in the Olympics, surely you can play us, as the French have done."

The Russian official was very polite. The Russian team, he said, would like very much to play the Globetrotters. But for this reason and that one, it would be impossible to play at this time. Thank you very much, Mr. Saperstein, but we're not having any.

The next day, Saperstein, at the invitation of Art Buchwald, of the Paris edition of the New York *Herald Tribune,* addressed the Anglo-American Press Association, becoming the first sports figure ever to speak to that organization. Abe touched on the Russian situation, then voiced the oft-expressed hope that the wars of the future might be fought on the fields of sport. But the way he said it was what counted. He told of his early days with the Globetrotters and of the satisfaction he felt at having built an organization that now was able to do something to help the cause of the country that had been so good to him. "Only through sports, gentlemen," he said, "and only in a free country could a nobody like me have done what I have been able to do. I hope that the day will come when every kid in every country

will have the same wonderful opportunities I have had." When Abe sat down those case-hardened newspapermen rose to cheer him.

The Globetrotters beat the Celtics that night, and the following afternoon we left Paris and drove to Reims. Something new had been added to the party—Pat Kennedy, probably the best known referee in the history of basketball. Until Pat came along, referees were pretty much faceless individuals who called rules infractions, took a shower after the game and went home. Few were known by name to the great mass of basketball fans.

Kennedy changed that. Kyle Crichton once observed in a *Collier's* article that Pat brought "gestures, apoplectic paroxysms and plain obnoxiousness" to the business of refereeing. Gestures and paroxysms, yes. But I have a hunch Crichton had tongue in cheek on the "obnoxiousness" bit. Kennedy is a dramatic guy, that's all. And by being dramatic he has made the public referee-conscious.

To Pat, such rules infractions as holding, charging and picking off are crimes only slightly less heinous than that of wife-beating, and he gets exercised about them in behalf of all law-abiding men, women and children. Let him apprehend a player in the act of committing a foul, and he blows his whistle like a clarinet virtuoso suddenly gone berserk. Then he advances upon the errant soul, gesticulating wildly. "No-no-no-no-NO!" he shrieks. "You can-n-n-n't DO that!" The fans—most of them, anyway—love it. And there have been numerous cases in which the malefactor has pleaded with Pat: "Honest, sir, I really didn't mean to do it."

One night some years ago Kennedy was working a college game in Madison Square Garden. Within five minutes he had called three fouls on a particular player, and was work-

ing up to a state of high indignation when the player mumbled something.

"WHA-A-AT did you say?" Pat demanded.

"I said," replied the player, "that it's bad enough for you to *yell* at me like that. But do you have to *crucify* me in front of all these people?"

At one stage of his career Kennedy was requested by a number of college coaches to stop acting like a road-company Hamlet and simply call the fouls in the manner of his less expressive fellows. This wounded Pat deeply, but he gave it a go. King Solomon himself never was more solemn about the matter of rendering decisions. It was pretty depressing to one and all, especially the customers, and finally the coaches went to Kennedy again.

"Go back to normal, Pat," they said, somewhat sadly. "When you try to be dignified you not only lose control of the game, but you make everybody miserable."

Saperstein added Kennedy to our troupe because Pat is both a colorful official and a pleasant party to have around. Also, while you're giving people abroad a look-see at basketball's greatest team attraction, why not give them a glimpse of its most famous referee—old "Purple Puss" Kennedy?

When we arrived at our hotel in Reims, rain had begun to fall. Inasmuch as we were scheduled to play outdoors at a stadium called the Velodrome, we kept our collective eyes on the meteorological conditions, and when the downpour increased along about seven o'clock, we figured the game was off. We sat around in the hotel, contemplating the rain-streaked windows and an unprofitable visit, when the telephone rang. I answered it. On the other end an excited Frenchman demanded to know where were "the dancers—the Globetrottairs."

"Where are they?" I echoed. "They're right here in the hotel, out of the rain."

"But they are supposed to be here at the stadium, to play the basketball," said the man, who was the local promoter.

"Play the basketball?" I said. "Haven't you noticed that it's raining—and raining hard?"

"Does it not rain in America?" the Frenchman sputtered. "The stadium, it is full of people waiting to see the basketball."

I relayed the information to Abe. "Well," he said, "if the French are game, so are we. Tell the guy we'll be there in thirty minutes."

Off we went to the stadium. The promoter was right. In the stands were more than five thousand people, thoroughly soaked by a storm of nor'easter ferocity, patiently waiting for the game to begin. The Globetrotters and the Celtics sloshed onto the floor. "Let some air out of the ball, and we'll play water polo," Clarence Wilson quipped.

There was no warm-up. Kennedy, working his first game on the tour, shook the raindrops out of his whistle and called the teams into action. It was probably the most unusual-looking group of basketball players who ever performed anywhere. Every man was attired in a vinylite rain hat and jacket, and several of them had been able to borrow overshoes. Play began, and about thirty seconds thereafter Kennedy walked to a sideline, engaged a front row spectator in a brief conversation and returned to the court, holding the spectator's umbrella above his head. The crowd applauded, and the players caught the spirit of the thing. Pretty soon each of them was equipped with an umbrella, freely proffered by the onlookers, and the sight of eleven umbrellas bobbing up and down on the court was something that would have made even a hidebound basketball con-

servative laugh. The umbrella act wasn't beaten to death, of course, and when the boys dispensed with the umbrellas they played with amazing adroitness, considering the conditions. The Globetrotters won, 46–26.

The rain continued throughout the game, but few, if any, of the spectators departed before the final whistle. And as the teams left the floor, the crowd cheered them lustily. "Listen to that," Saperstein said. "We ought to be cheering those people for coming out on a night like this to see us."

Our next port of call was Brussels, where we found the lobby of the Metropole Hotel bedecked with Belgian and American flags by way of greeting us. We played two nights to sell-out houses at the Velodrome, the Trotters and the Celtics beating local teams the first night, and the Trotters whipping the Celtics the second. On the second night, Randy Turpin, the former middleweight boxing champion of the world, tossed up the first ball to open the game.

Turpin is a Briton, but very popular in Belgium, where he has waged some of his best fights. We had met him in London, and he had been so taken by the Trotters that he flew to Brussels to renew acquaintanceships with the boys. He gladly accepted the assignment of throwing up the ball for the opening tap-off, but he didn't give Saperstein the cold sweats another great middleweight—possibly the greatest of all time—had given Abe in Paris in 1951.

The first night of that stand, Abe was busy checking on business details and didn't get into the Globetrotters' dressing room before the team went on the court. So he didn't know that Sugar Ray Robinson had suited up in a Trotter uniform. Robinson, then in the first phase of his middleweight championship (he subsequently lost it to Turpin in London, then regained it by knocking out Randy in New

York), is one of the Globetrotters' most avid fans, and always had a hankering to play with them.

The Trotters scampered onto the floor and went into the circle routine. Even then, Saperstein didn't notice Robinson. Nor did most of the spectators. Sugar Ray whipped the ball around like an old pro, and when the team took its warm-up shots he exhibited a good eye for the basket.

Finally, the time came for the individual introductions of the Globetrotters. The announcer, speaking in French of course, ran through the entire squad and each player stepped into the spotlight that was the only illumination in the darkened Palais des Sports.

"And now," the announcer said, "a great surprise—Sugar Ray Robinson, the middleweight champion of the world, who will play with the Globetrotters tonight." The crowd went wild. Robinson was, and still is, virtually an idol to the French sporting public. Although he is as American as the hot dog, Sugar Ray is regarded by the French as their personal avenger, because it was he who won the middleweight title from Jake LaMotta, who had won it from the late Marcel Cerdan, a Frenchman, on what Cerdan's countrymen consider to have been a fluke.

Saperstein rushed over to the grinning Robinson. "What's going on, Ray?" he asked. "How'd you do all this?"

"I just asked the boys to lend me a uniform, and they did," Robinson replied.

"Yeah, but what's this about your playing?" Abe said.

"I'd like to play for a few minutes," Sugar Ray said. "I figured it would be all right with you. I want to be able to say I played basketball with the Globetrotters."

Employing Sugar Ray Robinson with the Globetrotters in Paris would have been a ten-strike for Saperstein, but he resisted temptation. He refused to permit Robinson to play.

"If I had used Ray and he had been injured," Abe remarked later, "I would have been in so many doghouses that it would have taken me the rest of my life to get out. Can you imagine what Jack Solomons, who was promoting the Robinson-Turpin fight in London, would have said if Robinson had been hurt playing basketball and the fight had to be called off?"

During the remainder of our stay in Belgium we played in Charleroi, Ghent, Liége (on a concrete floor) and Antwerp, which is the diamond center of the country. One morning in Antwerp a stranger came to my hotel room, looked around like a guy who wants to be certain that he hasn't been followed and told me he had a great bargain in diamonds. He pulled out a small case and flashed a display of what I took to be genuine gems.

"If you were to buy these in your country," he said, "they would cost you thousands of dollars. Because I need the cash, I will let you have them for five hundred dollars. Even when you pay duty on them, the total cost will be only a fraction of their value."

I suppose there's a little larceny in all of us, and I took the bait. But I didn't have five hundred dollars. It would be necessary to negotiate a loan. So where did I go? Right. To Saperstein.

"Abe," I said, "I need five hundred dollars right away."

"What for?" he asked.

"I have a chance to pick up a load of diamonds for a song if I can get the money to swing it. It'll take five hundred clams."

Abe began to laugh. "You dumb cluck," he said, between guffaws, "won't you ever learn to spot a gag when it's pulled on you? That guy in your room is no diamond merchant. And his diamonds are pure glass. I sent the guy there to see

whether you'd fall for the oldest dodge in the world. You did." That incident brightened Abe's entire day.

His day was brightened even more when three new members of the troupe checked in: Sweetwater Clifton, a Globetrotter star before Saperstein sold him to the New York Knickerbockers (Clifton still is a Trotter at heart, and jumps at any chance to tour with his old buddies between seasons in the National Basketball Association); Bob Karstens, from Davenport, Iowa, and St. Ambrose College, who was to play with the Celtics; and Ray Wilbert, a veteran vaudevillian, who specializes in manipulating hoops. Abe was so set up, in fact, that he tossed a party for the entire troupe after the game that night and presented a twenty-dollar bonus to each of the players. At regular intervals throughout the tour he made similar extra gestures.

"It isn't just the parties or the money," Ermer Robinson has said of such practices by Saperstein. "It's the realization that Abe appreciates the people he employs. You want to hustle all the time for a man like that."

We all have heard a lot about bureaucracy in this country during the last twenty years or so, but I am able to state that it is nothing compared with what a man has to go through in France and Belgium when he wants to shepherd a group of foreigners from one country into the other. To make everything legal about moving the party from Paris to Brussels, with the stopover at Reims, I had to take all the visas to the Department of Immigration in Paris and have them cleared. I'm still punchy from the experience.

First, it was necessary to pay a service charge of 8790 francs on each visa, plus 90 francs in Belgian money. Then every visa had to be signed and rubber-stamped by eighteen different officials. It required two and a half hours to complete the job. I remarked to the official who finally handed

me the finished documents that the job had taken much longer than I had expected.

"But, *m'sieu,*" the man said, "we gave you what you Americans call the rush job, because you are the Globetrotters. You should be glad you are the Globetrotters, for otherwise you might have been here three, four, five times as long."

I hadn't known that I was the Globetrotters. But after thinking over what the man had said, I was glad that I was with them.

☆ High Road Through the Low Countries

ON A MAP OF EUROPE, LUXEMBOURG IS BUT A PINPOINT. IT IS a blend of the quaint and the modern, and if you saw either the stage or the movie version of *Call Me Madam,* you know that Luxembourg is the prototype for the little nation in which the story is laid. To the Globetrotters it is one of the friendliest nations in the world.

We spent less than twenty-four hours in Luxembourg, but the reception we were accorded there still remains bright in memory. In the capital city, Luxembourg, where we were quartered, American flags were hung in the public squares. We were given spontaneous ovations as our buses proceeded through the business district. Mrs. Perle Mesta, then the U. S. Minister to Luxembourg, was waiting for us at the Alfa Hotel and we spent an engaging half hour talking with her about home. Then we piled into the vehicles and drove to the industrial city of Esch-sur-Alzette where that night we were to play the first basketball game in the history of Luxembourg.

Saperstein and Walt Kennedy weren't with us, having flown back to London to catch Hadda Brooks in her night club engagement. So I was detailed to be the spokesman for the Globetrotters at a reception given for us by Mayor Anthony Krier in the city hall of Esch-sur-Alzette. I don't speak Luxembourgian, and my German and French are

shaky, but the mayor had the foresight to provide an interpreter, and by means of a linguistic double play we did all right.

"This is a great day for us," Mayor Krier said. "It is a pleasure to receive our American friends. Twice in less than thirty years we have greeted you as liberators, but this time you have come, not as soldiers who have to fight a dangerous enemy, but to offer us a show which certainly we shall never forget.

"We greet you as representatives of a big nation which during its course of history has never failed when liberty was in danger. May your stay among us, in our city of steel and iron, give you all satisfaction. May you return home and tell your people that Luxembourgers, and especially the city of Esch, have not forgotten."

How can you top a speech like that? I didn't try.

The game was played in the beautiful Emile Mayrisch Stadium on a night so pleasant that it seemed to be part of the arrangements these good people had made. The Luxembourg Army Band provided music, and just before the tap-off Babe Pressley, as captain of the Globetrotters, and Reds Klotz, leader of the Celtics, were practically engulfed by gifts of flowers. The people of Luxembourg may never have seen a basketball game before, but you wouldn't have known it by their reaction. Everything we did provoked applause. And after the game, won by the Trotters, 50–39, players on both teams were mobbed by Luxembourgers who wanted autographs or a word or two of English.

Such experiences were old hat to the Globetrotters. During the 1951 tour, some of the players literally lost their shirts—and their coats, ties and trousers—to enthusiastic souvenir hunters. So Saperstein took steps to forestall a

repetition of this on the world tour. Abe solved the problem with rabbits' feet.

They really weren't rabbits' feet, but chunks of simulated white fur pinned to a "good luck" button. All the players carried a dozen or so of these things with them at all times, and they filled the bill. The fans went away happy, clutching the mementos, and the boys never lost so much as a necktie.

But the Luxembourgers weren't looking for souvenirs so much as they were seeking to tell these American athletes how much they appreciated what, to them, had been a great spectacle. "Ours is not a large nation," Mayor Krier told us after the game, "but it is not necessary to be big to express what is in one's heart. It has been our honor to have you here, and we invite you to come back whenever you can."

The next day we visited the American military cemetery near Luxembourg and laid a wreath on the grave of General George S. Patton, Jr. This great soldier's final resting place is as simple as any private's, with a small white cross on which is painted:

George S. Patton, Jr.
General 0–2605 3rd Army

The Globetrotters walked quietly through the cemetery, observing the names on the crosses and the Stars of David. These weren't the buffoons of basketball. These were simply good Americans paying their tribute to other good Americans who had fallen in battle. It was Babe Pressley who said it best: "There's great democracy here for all to see." And there is. Next to a cross bearing the name of Sergeant Albert J. Irish is a Star of David with the name of Sergeant Michael Rahoff. And so it goes throughout the cemetery.

From there we went to Bastogne, Belgium, where a memorial has been erected to the Americans who died in the Battle of the Bulge. Again it was with solemnity that the

Trotters and the other members of the party climbed the fifty-nine steps to the top of the memorial and read the inscriptions on ten bronze tablets describing the battle. We all agreed that tablet ten summed up what we were thinking:

"Of these dead, and of those who fought here, the now living may attest the greatness of the deed only by the increased devotion to the freedom for which they braved the fire."

Now we moved into The Netherlands. As we rolled along over fine roads on the flat countryside we saw the inevitable windmills and canals and people riding bicycles, and it was good. Holland is a spotlessly clean country and its people impressed us as being frank, open and decidedly friendly toward Americans. The Globetrotters had been there the previous year, and the welcome we received at the City Hall of Amsterdam rivaled the one we got in Esch-sur-Alzette.

Holland's one and only basketball promoter is a sweet brunette dish named Suzi Van Dam who, for all I know, may be the only lady promoter of basketball in the world. Suzi is thirtyish and charming, and the wife of Luc Van Dam, the Dutch middleweight boxing champion. Suzi and Luc have three nice children, but don't peg Suzi as merely a housewife who is dabbling in sports promotions. She is an astute businesswoman, and in any enterprise with which she is connected she is the boss.

The night the Globetrotters played the Celtics at the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam, two members of the Celtics showed up at the pass gate about an hour before game time with a couple of local belles in tow. As they started to walk in, an attendant stopped them and politely asked for the girls' tickets.

"Tickets?" said one of the guys. "They don't need tickets. They're with us."

"Sorry, sir," said the attendant in precise English. "I cannot permit them to enter unless they have tickets. Those are orders from Mevrouw Van Dam."

"We'll see about that," the Celtic snorted. "Why, this is stupid. Everywhere else we've played on this trip we've been permitted to bring in anyone we wanted to."

Right here let me say that we always tried to discourage this sort of thing, because the quickest way to foul yourself up with a promoter is to give him the idea that you are grabbing off seats he could have sold. But there were times when some of the players fast-talked attendants into letting their guests in for free, and we didn't learn about it until later.

In this case, however, the attendant stood firm and sent for Suzi. I was in her office when word of the fuss was brought to her, and went out to the pass gate with her.

"Now, what is the trouble?" she inquired. The Celtic players went through the routine, but a little less forcefully than before perhaps, because Suzi was smiling prettily.

"I'm sorry," Suzi said, still smiling, "but we have a strict rule about such things here. I am afraid these young women cannot come in without tickets."

"How about that, Zink?" one of the players asked. "How come we have to pay to get these girls in when we're playing in the game?"

"Because," I said, "there's a rule about it here, and we always go by the rules wherever we play. You know better than to try something like this."

"Yeah," the player said, "but we'll never live it down if the other guys find out we were stopped by a woman."

The young ladies witnessed the game, but only after their

escorts had shelled out eight gulden (about three dollars) apiece for tickets. Suzi Van Dam doesn't make rules to be winked at.

Saperstein and Walt Kennedy rejoined us in Amsterdam, along with Charley Michaelis, Abe's European representative with offices in Paris, and his French representative, Gilbert Benaim. Saperstein's administrative network is so complete that it is likely that a tour could be arranged for the Globetrotters in any part of the world (except for Soviet-dominated countries) within a matter of days, insofar as playing dates would be concerned.

In the Krasnapolsky Hotel we found our dinner tables decorated with American flags, and solicitous waiters hovered over us throughout the meals. People are people, I guess. I'd like to have a dollar for every time some parent in this country has asked me to get an autograph of a big league baseball player or a prominent fighter for his or her child. It's no different abroad. During our first meal at the hotel, the waiter at my table said quietly to me:

"Sir, which gentleman is DeHeer Saperstein?" I nodded toward Abe. "And which gentleman, sir," the waiter continued, "is DeHeer Tatum?"

"Over there," I said, spotting Goose.

"Sir," the waiter said, "would it be possible for you to get DeHeer Saperstein's and DeHeer Tatum's autographs for me? I would like to have them for my small son, who has heard so much about them."

The waiter got the autographs.

There were fifteen thousand Hollanders at the Olympic Stadium that night to watch the Trotters beat the Celtics, 45–33. The portable floor had been shipped on to Germany from Luxembourg, and the boys had to play on dirt, like kids playing behind a rural school almost anywhere in

America. Aside from this, everything was first class, including the character in white tie and tails who served coffee to the substitutes on the players' benches during the game.

The next morning, a group of Dutch school girls—counterparts of our seventh- and eight-graders—came to the hotel and volunteered to take the Globetrotters on a sight-seeing tour of Amsterdam. The kids were so appealing that five of the Trotters accepted the invitation. It made for quite a sight—the towering Trotters walking down the street with those kids who were attired in long dresses and aprons, peaked caps and wooden shoes, with everyone going yakkity-yak. None of the Trotters could speak Dutch and the youngsters didn't know much English, but this didn't seem to be a bar to conversation. When people can laugh together, words don't matter much.

That afternoon we pushed on to Rotterdam, where Suzi had booked the teams to play in the Sparta Stadium. The stadium is not equipped with lights, so the game began at 5 P.M. and darkness was closing in rapidly at the finish. But that wasn't the big problem.

It was cold. I mean cold. Saperstein swears the temperature was one degree above freezing, but that's an exaggeration. It was two degrees above freezing.

The Rotterdammers sounded like members of the California and Florida chambers of commerce seeking to impress upon visitors that, although it *is* raining, this is the first time in the memory of the oldest inhabitant that so much rain has ever fallen hereabouts—honest, cross my heart and give you my word.

"Never before," a Rotterdam newspaperman told Abe, "has it been so chilly here at this time of the year. I cannot explain it."

"Who wants explanations?" Abe grinned. "Let's get the game started before we all freeze."

When athletes are performing night after night, they welcome time outs. They don't object to being removed from action occasionally while substitutes spell them. Ordinarily, that is. But on this night in Rotterdam nobody wanted to be a substitute. Everybody wanted to play, and play the full game.

"Boss," Tatum told Abe, "don't you dare take me out of the game tonight. You do, and I'll be an ice cube inside of three minutes."

Finally, Abe and Eddie Gottlieb, who was acting as bench boss of the Celtics, named the five lucky men on each team who would see action at the outset, and the game began. The Globetrotters forgot about conserving energy and the Celtics ran along with them. Nobody called a time out. On the benches, the subs huddled like animated popsicles beneath the warm-up jackets left there by the active participants and prayed that they would be sent into the game.

Somehow, we all escaped without so much as a case of frostbite. As darkness settled over the stadium the game ended with the Globetrotters in front, 36–29, and everyone, including the general manager-traveling secretary-etc., ran for the dressing rooms and hot showers.

The cold held down the crowd to about ten thousand, but the people who risked freezing had a good time. They applauded the entertainers, laughed at the antics of the Trotters and cheered intelligently the good plays by both teams. Until the police put a stop to it to avoid confusion, dozens of spectators came down to the benches to offer the substitutes their own coats.

Just for kicks, Abe and I rode downtown aboard a trolley car after the game. We still were cold, but we talked mostly

about the warmth of the Dutch people. "Wouldn't it be wonderful," I said, "if the whole world could be as fine as this little country?"

"It would be wonderful," Abe agreed. "And some day, if we all keep trying, it will be."

☆ *Bouncing Beverly*

IN THE FINAL MONTHS OF THE TOUR, WHEN WE WERE IN the Philippines and most of us wondered whether we possessed sufficient reserve energy to get home without being packaged by a mortician, I made this note in my diary: "A Harlem Globetrotters trip separates the men from the boys."

This was neither original nor precisely correct. Because Beverly Farris was with us. And if you're going to separate the men from the boys, where are you going to put Beverly who, as must be obvious to anyone with even the slightest perspicacity, is as feminine as feminine can be?

Beverly was the only woman to make the entire tour, Hadda Brooks and Sally Baudendistal having flown home from Cairo. In fact, Beverly was one of the super-travelers. She went along on the South American junket, took a two-day rest upon returning to the United States, then climbed aboard our plane at Idlewild and set out to see the rest of the world.

It might be said that Beverly and her husband, Les, bounced around the world while the Globetrotters trotted. The Farrises are gyroscopic people who throw themselves around on the trampolin—a bouncy chunk of canvas latched onto a steel frame about the size of a small bed. It is a pursuit that demands perfect reflexes and co-ordination as well as the expenditure of an amazing amount of energy within

a short time. Tests have shown that in sixty seconds of action a trampolin performer burns up as much muscular and nervous energy as a runner expends in a fast 440-yard dash.

To return to the separation of the men from the boys angle, it is baring no secret to reveal that Beverly Farris bore up under the rigors of the trip with greater fortitude than many of the brawny males who were her traveling companions. Just once did she report to sick bay, and then only because of a severe cold. She never missed a performance, and she spent much of her free time, particularly during the final phases of the tour, taking care of the sick and the lame among the so-called stronger sex.

"It got so that I felt almost like the mother of those boys," she has remarked. This was a natural feeling, for Beverly and Les have a son, Gary Lee, born March 7, 1951, who already shows promise of outdoing both his parents on the trampolin. Gary couldn't be taken on the world tour, of course, but when Beverly and Les are on the road with the Globetrotters in this country during the regular season the youngster travels with them. Gary has been doing this since he was six weeks old and is accustomed to sleeping in a crib set up in dressing rooms.

Gary worships the Globetrotters, whom he refers to as "the guys," and his principal idol is Tatum. Goose returns this adoration and is very tender with the child. This is another facet of the paradox that is Goose Tatum. The man may have a mad on at the world, but when Gary Farris comes to him and says, "Goose take Gary for walk," Tatum grins and answers "Let's go, boy." It is a wondrous sight to behold these two walking along together, Goose clutching the little fellow's chubby fist in his ham-size hand. When Gary comes down with the sniffles or some other minor ail-

ment Tatum is as solicitous as a mother hen. "Goose told me once," Beverly has said, "that he feels toward Gary as he does toward his own two children."

How can I say this without sounding sticky? The most important person in Gary Farris's young life, aside from his parents, is Goose Tatum. I think it's pretty wonderful.

Beverly Farris is a cute trick, five feet one inch tall and weighing a hundred pounds. She has blonde hair and blue eyes and an excellent figure. She is, in fact, such a tidy package of crisp, crunchy goodness that nearly everywhere we went she received overtures from local Don Juans who either weren't aware that she was married to her partner or, knowing, didn't care. She fluffed them all off, of course, but one guy in Beyrouth, Lebanon, still hadn't stopped trying as this was written.

Beverly and Les met this character at a party given in our honor in Beyrouth after a game. He was a nice enough fellow, but it soon became apparent that he was trying to shake Les so that he could be alone with Beverly. "Why don't you go and find Sally?" the guy kept saying to Les, who would reply that he was quite happy where he was, thank you, and had no especial interest in what Sally or any other girl was doing. All this made Beverly somewhat uncomfortable, but so long as the character didn't become downright obnoxious she saw no reason for making a scene.

The party ended, and the guy accompanied the Farrises back to the hotel. He seemed set back when Beverly and Les bade him good night in the lobby and beat it for the elevators, but not so set back that he couldn't rout them out of bed a few hours later with a telephone call, inviting Beverly to go horseback riding. Beverly thanked him and said no. Still the guy wasn't discouraged. He showed up at the game that night and tried to date Beverly.

"I thought then," Beverly told me, "that I made it quite clear to him that I was married and that I wanted him to stop bothering me. But apparently he either didn't hear me or he didn't understand."

Just the other day Beverly received a letter from the guy in Beyrouth, addressed to her in care of the Globetrotters' office in Chicago. In part, it read: "You are the sun in the night, the water in the Sahara . . . I dream of you constantly. . . . Please give my regards to your charming brother, Les."

"That," Les said with a laugh when he showed me the letter, "was the unkindest cut of all. I really must be in the old-married-man stage when I give the impression that I'm my own wife's charming brother."

Beverly says she felt "lonesome, at first" after Hadda and Sally left the troupe, but she soon was accepted as "one of the boys," particularly by the Trotters. She and Les usually rode in the Trotters' bus or plane. "That little lady is strictly first class," Saperstein has often remarked. "She did a great deal toward keeping things running smoothly with her gracious manner and ready smile." Prior to the tour Beverly wasn't much of a card player. But most of the Trotters are pinochle experts, and they invited Beverly and Les to sit in with them in the games that were played almost daily in the buses, on trains or aboard planes. Result: Beverly wound up beating many of the experts at their own game.

The trampolin and the Farrises have been going steady for years. In 1947 Beverly Swisher, of Champaign, Illinois, a freshman in the Art School of the University of Illinois, was bouncing on the trampolin in the gymnasium one afternoon when a young man asked her opinion on how a certain type of somersault should be executed. Thus began one of those beautiful, beautiful friendships because the young man

was Les Farris, from Louisville, Illinois, a sophomore in the School of Agriculture.

Beverly and Les teamed up on the trampolin, working whenever they could get engagements in theaters or night clubs in the Champaign area to earn money to help pay their college expenses. Saperstein heard about them and arranged for them to come to Chicago for an audition.

"We went out and bought new costumes," Les has said. "We wanted to make a good impression. So we got a couple of frilly silk and satin jobs, figuring they would make a hit."

The audition came off. So did the frilly costumes, to be replaced by something more simple. Saperstein liked the act, but not the costumes.

"Look," he said. "You're a couple of clean-cut college kids. You have a nice fresh act, and I want to use it. But why louse it up with all those ruffles and frills? I want you to wear simple white gym suits, with ILLINOIS in orange and blue lettering on the front of the shirts."

Beverly and Les left the university in the autumn of 1948 and went on the road with the Trotters. Both intended to return to college after a season or two, but the work was steady and the pay good, so neither ever got around to it. On December 26, 1949, they were married at Les's home in Louisville. "The ceremony was held at 4 P.M.," Les has said. "At eight, we left for Charleston, West Virginia, to rejoin the Globetrotters the next night. We had a thirteen-week honeymoon on a trampolin."

Beverly worked to within four months of the arrival of the baby. Naturally, the youngster turned out to be a bouncing boy, thus scoring a point for the exponents of prenatal influence.

Young Gary remained with Les's parents while the

Farrises were on the world tour. Beverly and Les telephoned home from Milan, Italy, once to check on the boy's welfare but found they could do a more thorough job of checking up by means of cablegrams and air mail letters.

Beverly's brother, Harlan Swisher, was a patient in a tuberculosis sanitarium in Champaign at the time, and to while away the hours he took to writing two letters a day to Bev and Les. He had a copy of our itinerary and always addressed the letters to the city where we were scheduled to be ten days from the day he mailed them. He didn't know where we would be quartered, however, so he addressed the letters like this:

Mr. & Mrs. Les Farris
c/o The Harlem Globetrotters
Tokyo, Japan

That's just a sample, of course. Usually the city changed from day to day and the country every few days.

The point is that every letter Harlan mailed was delivered to Les and Beverly. When you talk about the Harlem Globetrotters' being "world famous," you're not just talking.

Unlike the piano player in a dance band who doesn't have to worry about lugging his equipment with him, Beverly and Les had to cart their trampolin all over the world. The frame is collapsible, made of tubular steel, and weighs two hundred pounds. When the troupe reached London, the trampolin, which had been sent from New York via air express, failed to turn up. It seemed that Beverly and Les wouldn't be able to go on at the Empire Pool, but one of the British sports writers ran a note on their plight and Roy Brooks, an English trampolin artist, came galloping to the rescue by offering them the use of his equipment. The Farrises' own trampolin was found a few days

later in Paris, and from then on Beverly and Les insisted upon carrying it with them.

One of the highlights of the act is Bev's bounding off the trampolin, sailing through lower space for a distance of fifteen feet or so, and being caught by Les, who makes the grab with one hand. Les never has fumbled, which is a good thing, because if he did, Beverly would get her vertebrae scrambled.

The British newspaper photographers who came to our hotel that first day in London wanted to make pictures of this bit, but there was no trampolin from which to do it. But you can't top American ingenuity.

"What you really want is a picture of me catching Beverly at the finish of her jump, isn't it?" Les asked. Right, said the photographers.

"O.K.," Les said. "If you'll excuse us a moment while we get into our working clothes, we'll see what we can do."

When the couple returned, Beverly climbed onto a table and Les stood four or five feet away. It was simple. Beverly leaped from the tabletop, Les made the usual one-hand catch and the photographers got their pictures. There wasn't a trampolin within miles of the place. One of the pictures, incidentally, was published in newspapers throughout the world, the caption stating that Beverly Farris was shown completing her death-defying leap from a trampolin with the help of her husband, Les, at the Empire Pool in London.

One of Beverly's principal problems was that of purchasing clothes abroad. She wears size seven, and European women being constructed as they are, there are very few size sevens to be found during a world tour except in the Orient. So Bev went shopping for material and proceeded to make dresses. Sewing industriously while we were traveling, she made one dress a week for three weeks. In Madrid she

found some attractive material and decided to make still another dress. She really bore down on that one. She began operations at 11 A.M. and was wearing the dress at 4 P.M.

In Algiers, the Farrises' costumes were stolen from their dressing room after they had finished their act and gone out to watch the game. But not even this apparent calamity stopped them. Les borrowed a costume from Jacques Cordon, and in Marseilles the next morning Beverly went shopping, and when she and Les came out for their act that night the applause was deafening. Beverly was attired in a T shirt and what I probably should describe merely as white shorts, but in the interest of accurate reporting I must reveal that they were cotton unmentionables of the type worn by French women. There was nothing indecent about them; it was just that the French—particularly the men—were enthused about seeing such things on a pretty girl in public.

The Farrises had to get along with their makeshift costumes until we reached Singapore where Abe, who had made another of his flying trips back to the States, brought them replacements from home. Les had been having a trying time with the costume borrowed from Cordon. It was by no means a good fit, and twice—once in Nice and again in Rome—he nearly lost his trousers while turning somersaults.

Audiences everywhere liked Beverly and Les, but the Germans were the most responsive. When Beverly would somersault through a hoop high above the trampolin or Les would fling himself around while skipping rope, bounce fashion, the German spectators almost ripped up the seats in their frenzied appreciation. In the Far East, on the other hand, audiences generally were quiet, even when Beverly and Les brought off their most daring tricks.

"It worried us at first," Beverly has said. "We thought

we were laying a bomb. Then we found out that silence means approval of a performance in most Oriental countries."

Toward the end of the tour Beverly began to run out of steam, but she didn't complain and she wouldn't quit. Night after night she went on with Les, and whenever one of the players became ill or needed a tape job on a sprained ankle or wrist, there was Beverly, volunteering for nursing duty.

The day we returned to the United States, a press luncheon was held in San Francisco. One of the reporters asked Beverly her reactions to having been the only woman in the company of a group of male athletes for six weeks.

"I don't know," Beverly replied, her eyes twinkling. "I was one of the boys."

☆ *Encore in Berlin*

LET'S FLASH BACK TO AUGUST 22, 1951. THE SCENE: THE Olympic Stadium in Berlin. Dramatis personae: the Harlem Globetrotters; the Boston Whirlwinds, the Trotters' opponents on that summer's tour; and seventy-five thousand Germans.

This drama—and it was drama in the fullest sense of the word—is resurrected now because probably nothing that ever happened to the Globetrotters is more illustrative of their standing as unofficial ambassadors of good will in countries where Americans generally are looked upon with something less than charity. Some day historians may see fit to include it in their chronicles of postwar Germany. It belongs there.

Berlin wasn't on the itinerary (remember, this was 1951), but on August 19, John J. McCloy, then High Commissioner for the American zone in Germany, saw the Globetrotters play in Frankfurt. After the game he went to Abe Saperstein.

"I'd like you to do me a personal favor," he said.

"I'll be glad to, if I can," replied Abe. "What is it?"

"Well," McCloy said, "the Communists in East Berlin have been giving us a hard time with their propaganda. They have been holding youth rallies just across the line from our sector, screaming about how the western nations

preach democracy but don't practice it. It seems to me that your team is such a fine advertisement for American democracy that by playing a game in Berlin they could counteract the Communist claims."

"O.K., Commissioner," Abe said. "We'll do anything we can to help."

He meant what he said about wanting to help, and he wasn't afraid of the Communists. He was, however, thinking of the welfare of his athletes. Only a few weeks earlier a riot had occurred in West Berlin during a prize fight between Sugar Ray Robinson and Gustav Hecht. Irate Germans stormed the ring, claiming Robinson had punched Hecht several degrees south of the equator. Two days later the fight was ruled no contest but at the time the referee gave the bout to Hecht, explaining at the subsequent hearing that neither his life nor Sugar Ray's would have been worth a counterfeit mark had he rendered any other decision. Saperstein, understandably, was fearful that the mob would attempt to get even with the next Negro athletes to come along.

But Abe had given his word, and the game was arranged for August 22, originally listed as an off-day before the Trotters opened in Paris. McCloy clouted State Department and military brass over the head with impartial abandon. The stadium, site of the 1936 Olympiad, was made available. The Air Force put three planes at the disposal of the Globetrotters, and the portable floor was flown, section by section, to Berlin. A hurry-up job of publicizing the game was done through radio announcements and newspaper stories. Everyone was invited to attend, for this was to be a free show sponsored by the American occupation authorities. Even so, there had been so little time to build up the event

that McCloy estimated the crowd would be about ten thousand, at the most.

The day of the game the Globetrotters flew into Berlin and were taken directly to the stadium by bus. About a mile from the stadium the bus was stopped by thousands of noisy Germans, who surrounded the vehicle. Those up close tried to climb through the windows, apparently bent on laying hands on the passengers.

"I was sure this was the riot I had been afraid of," Saperstein has said. "Why had I been so stupid as to get us into a jam like this? Then, just as I resigned myself to getting lynched, or something, it dawned on me that this wasn't a lynch mob, at all.

"Those screwballs weren't trying to tear my boys up. They just wanted to touch them. If anybody had told me a few years earlier that the day would come when I would be smiling at a bunch of krauts instead of wanting to knock their heads together, I would have said the guy was nuts. But there I was, smiling and waving and acting like the most relieved man in the world—which, at the moment, I was."

The bus virtually crawled the remainder of the way to the stadium, and there, instead of the ten thousand spectators McCloy had estimated, were seventy-five thousand. Prior to this the two largest crowds ever to have witnessed a basketball game anywhere were the 31,648 fans the Globetrotters attracted to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, April 9, 1951, and the 50,041 who saw the Trotters play in the Estadio Municipal in Rio de Janeiro a month later. The Globetrotters established a new American attendance record April 8, 1953, when 36,256 people watched them play the College All-Americans at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

The Globetrotters and the Whirlwinds went at it, and every time a Trotter so much as tied a shoelace he was cheered. This, mind you, by people who for years had had it drummed into them by the most diabolic hate-monger in history that it was their birthright to enslave or wipe out so-called "inferior" races. Spectators broke through police lines in attempts to get closer to the players and shake hands. The Trotters had taken the place by storm.

But Saperstein had one more shot left in his locker. During the halftime intermission an Air Force helicopter appeared over the stadium, circled it three times and then landed in the center of the field. From the plane emerged Jesse Owens, the great sprinter and broad jumper, wearing the uniform he wore fifteen years earlier when he won four Olympic medals in this same stadium.

Adolf Hitler had sneeringly referred to Owens and other American Negro athletes as "America's Africa Legion," and had refused to congratulate them after their victories. Owens won the 100- and 200-meter dashes and the broad jump, and was the anchor man on America's victorious 400-meter relay team, and whenever he approached the victory pedestal upon which a winner stands to receive his medal, Hitler arose and left the stadium. The thousands of other Germans in attendance, who had paid to get in and hence didn't want to leave, oozed silent hostility as Owens mounted the pedestal.

But now it was 1951 and here was Owens. The crowd came to its feet and let go with a thunderous ovation. For fully five minutes there was a solid wave of noise. Jesse stood at midfield, waving and bowing. Then, running with that effortless stride, he circled the track. The noise continued until after Owens had finished his lap and a white-haired

man had come out of the stands and stood with Jesse before the public address system microphone.

The man was Ludwig Shreiber, the acting mayor of West Berlin. The crowd recognized him and the noise died away. Then the mayor turned to Owens, hands outstretched.

"Fifteen years ago on this field," he said, "Hitler refused to offer you his hand. Now I give you both of mine."

Shreiber spoke in German, of course, and it wasn't until a little later that Owens knew exactly what he had said. But Jesse didn't need words to grasp the spirit of the speech and he stepped forward to shake hands with Shreiber.

The noise that went up then made that which had gone before seem like refined applause. People came spilling down out of the stands to surround Owens and for a time it seemed that those who had come to praise Jesse were going to bury him. It was all the police could do to rescue him from his well-wishers.

"When I heard the mayor speak and saw those people whooping it up for Jesse, I almost cried, I felt so good," Saperstein has said. "Nobody who was there that day ever will forget it."

It was a day of mob scenes—good-natured mob scenes, that is. When the game ended the players had to hole up under the stands for nearly an hour, then leave by a side exit to escape the crowds that jammed around the main exit. Even then they weren't in the clear. Under ordinary traffic conditions it takes only about a half-hour to drive from the stadium to the Amsel Hotel, where the Globetrotters were staying. But now the streets were so clogged with people who wanted one more look at the Trotters that more than two hours were needed for the team's bus to get through.

Naturally, after the artistic and diplomatic success (the

kind of diplomacy that means something to the average guy) of the Berlin venture, that city was included in the itinerary for the world tour. This time, tickets would be sold for the game at American-scale prices (one dollar to three dollars), thus raising a question: would Berliners, having been given something for nothing one year, pay for that same something the next?

"They will," Abe predicted. "The reception we got last year wasn't phony. It was the real thing, and its effects are bound to carry over. We'll do good business—maybe not seventy-five thousand, but enough to pay the rent."

We had at least one strike on us before we arrived. It had rained almost continuously in Berlin for three days, and the Unter den Linden was *unter*. The weather forecast for the game day was for more rain. As few of the seats in the Olympic Stadium are under any sort of cover, prospects weren't exactly bright.

Because any and all GI's stationed in the Berlin area had been invited to attend the game as our guests (wherever we played abroad American servicemen and women could come in on the cuff), the Army gave us every possible assistance. I had been detailed to handle last-minute promotion, and the big brass not only provided me with a staff car but assigned me an aide—a major. I was really living. I had spent so much time as a private during my Army career that I saluted latrine orderlies. And now here I was with a major at my beck and call.

As part of the build-up, I did a broadcast over Station RIAS (Radio in American Sector). In the studio were a number of blue-shirted kids from East Berlin, who had come across the border after attending a Communist youth rally to see how things were in West Berlin. After the broadcast I spoke to them in what passes for German with me, talk-

ing about sports in general and suggesting that they come to the game as my guests. No reaction.

But out in the hallway four of the youngsters—boys, ranging in age from about ten to fourteen—came running after me, jabbering away in German. They would like to go to the game, they said, but——

"But what?" I asked.

"We have no money," one of the boys said, "and we are hungry. We were going to go home, but if we had money for a meal we would stay and go to the game. Would you give us some money?"

O.K., so I'm a soft touch. I gave each of the kids five marks (about a dollar) and a pass to the game. "I'll see you at the stadium," I said. The boys said they would be there.

"You're a sucker," one of the RIAS staff members told me when the youngsters left. "Those young Commies are laughing themselves sick right now over how they clipped a stupid American. You might as well have thrown your money into the street."

"Maybe," I said. "But I'd do it again. Let's just say that I'm speculating."

What with worrying about the weather and briefing Jerry Buchholz, our German public address system announcer (in non-English-speaking countries a local spieler always handled the microphone while I sat by to fill him in on basketball terms), I forgot about the kids. It was raining when we left the Amsel Hotel for the stadium and the traffic didn't seem unusually heavy. We're dead, I thought. We won't draw enough to pay the light bill tonight.

But as our bus drew up to the players' entrance there was a crowd, whooping and hollering for the Trotters. Military police cleared a path for the boys, and we entered the stadium. Inside we found forty thousand spectators—about

ten thousand GI's, the remainder Germans who had paid to get in—patiently awaiting the arrival of the Globetrotters. Abe winked at me. "I told you we'd do all right," he said. "What were you worried about?"

In spite of intermittent rain squalls, it was a large evening. Three bands—the 298th Army Band, U.S.A., and two British military musical units—provided music. Major General Lemuel Mathewson, U. S. military commander in Berlin, who had tossed up the first ball for the 1951 game, did a retake and acquitted himself nobly. Tossing up the first ball, by the way, isn't as easy as it appears, particularly when you're not accustomed to doing it. One night in Indianapolis, Senator Homer E. Capehart of Indiana, who refers to Abe Saperstein as "a great American," made the opening toss for a Globetrotters' game and put so much english on the ball that the two centers nearly knocked themselves out trying to reach it.

It wasn't until after the game, which was a real wingding, won by the Trotters, 42–36, after the Celtics had pressed them nearly all the way, that I remembered the kids from East Berlin. As play ended, the crowd surged onto the field, trying to reach the Globetrotters, and I was running for shelter with the players when I noticed a small altercation on the fringe of the crowd. A couple of policemen had collared four boys wearing blue shirts and were having a hard time holding them. Just as I recognized them as the youngsters to whom I had given passes and money that afternoon, they broke away and ran to me.

"We were afraid it would not be possible for us to greet you," said one. "The police would not believe we knew anyone with the American basketball players."

"But we greet you after all," another panted. "We have been here many hours and we are glad we came. It is a fine

thing, American basketball. Thank you for inviting us."

I've had many thrills out of sports, but that incident stands as the greatest of all. I can still remember its unparalleled glow. I never learned those kids' names, but they really don't matter. I have a feeling that somewhere in East Germany there are at least four German boys no longer completely sold on Communism.

Back at the hotel, I talked with a reporter from one of the West Berlin newspapers who had seen the game. "I was there last year, also," he said. "I want to tell you something you no doubt have heard many times before, but I must say it: the Harlem Globetrotters are doing more for good will than a half-dozen diplomats. I hope you will be able to return frequently to Berlin."

I don't mean to create the impression that all Germans have become enamored of us Yankees or that they will all be good neighbors of ours in this ever-shrinking world. They haven't, and they won't. We spent sixteen days in Germany, and it was obvious that to many of the Germans this is just the pause before the next round of the battle.

Like the day in Dortmund when we were taken on a tour of the largest brewery in Germany. As we passed through the bottling room a workman, probably figuring that none of us understood German, called out to the man across from him: "Dumb Americans. Some day we conquer them." Along an autobahn in the Ruhr we witnessed what appeared to be a Nationalist rally. And in Cologne we were told by a city official that "the average German is interested only in beer and rebuilding so that he can fight again."

Our first game in Germany was at Dortmund, where fifteen thousand people filled the finest sports arena in Europe. Built of glass brick, it hasn't a single girder. That night, Dr. Arthur Steinhaus, a German scientist who now

works with the U. S. Navy, told Walt Kennedy: "Twenty years ago, I heard Adolf Hitler address a capacity audience here. The bottom line on the ticket of admission read: 'No Jews Allowed.' Tonight, Abe Saperstein has brought his team here and attracted another full house. It is a genuine thrill to see this."

We played two games in the rain at Eis Stadion in Cologne to standing-room-only crowds of more than seven thousand. Newsreel pictures were made of these games and were shown in theaters throughout Western Germany two days later. We found out later that many Germans got the impression that you had to have rain to play basketball.

Eddie Gottlieb and Walt Kennedy took leave of us in Cologne to return to the United States, but in Berlin we added a member to the troupe when Jack Collier, from Rush Springs, Oklahoma, and East Central Oklahoma State Teachers College, flew in to join the Celtics. Collier is a natural clown, almost as clever as Goose Tatum in his own way. He might be described as a white Globetrotter. When he and Tatum got to cutting up together on the floor they fractured the customers.

In Hamburg, we discovered that the local promoter had arranged for Max Schmeling, the former heavyweight boxing champion, to throw up the first ball, and Abe hit the ceiling. Schmeling is popular with the German Nationalists, but ranks considerably lower in Abe's book.

The promoter argued that Schmeling's appearance had been advertised and that to pull him off the program now might stir up a ruckus. Reluctantly, Abe finally agreed to permit Schmeling to go on. "The worst sound I heard on the entire tour," he said later, "was the big cheer the guy got from those Nationalists."

During the Hamburg game we narrowly averted a junior-

size riot that had no political overtones. Goose Tatum noticed youngsters sitting in the aisles and called time. "C'mon down here, where you can see better," he yelled, pointing to the floor area between the sideline and the first row of seats. The kids probably didn't understand what he said, but they knew an invitation when they saw one. They swarmed down like locusts, but they didn't stop at the sideline. They went onto the floor and began making like jitterbugs. It required ten minutes and the services of a dozen cops to shoo them off the playing surface. "Man," Tatum remarked, "when I saw all those kids comin' toward us and knew they weren't goin' to stop, I thought, 'Goose, won't you ever learn to keep your big mouth shut?' "

Sunday, June 29, in Hanover, was what I titled in my diary "Bad Luck Day." First, Saperstein and Tatum left for the States, Abe to attend to business in Chicago, Goose to visit his sick mother. Then Joe Lyles was injured during the game and had to be taken to a hospital. Finally, returning to the hotel, with Elliot Hasan at the wheel of the Cadillac, we collided with a car driven by a young German woman. Cops came running from behind every bush. After an on-the-spot investigation, the girl was driven home in a police car. We—Hasan, Frank Washington and I—were placed in a paddy wagon to be taken to a hospital for a check-up, and then to the police station. It's a good thing none of us was more than shaken up, because those cops stopped three times en route to try and purchase cigars. This was my first trip in such a vehicle, and I was considerably irked. But I found solace in the thought: "How different this would have been ten years ago when the Nazis held the whip hand."

Everything turned out all right. The police decided that the German car had been in the wrong, and we were re-

leased. We had the dent in the Cadillac's fender ironed out before we left for Dusseldorf the next morning. In Dusseldorf we took Joe Lyles to the British Medical Center where a competent medico, Dr. Hans Dembrowski, treated Joe's bruised ribs and told him he would be fit for duty within a few days.

In Mannheim on July 4 we played an outdoor game beneath a blazing sun that sent the thermometer up to 103 degrees. Hasan pulled a switch on the umbrella routine. He refereed the game and pranced around holding a gaudy silk parasol over his head, to the delight of some fifteen thousand onlookers, about 95 per cent of whom were GI's from my old World War II outfit, the 28th Division from Pennsylvania.

In all, the Globetrotters played the Celtics seventeen times in Germany and—you guessed it—won seventeen games. But the game that impressed me the most never made the overseas press wires, and it involved neither the Trotters nor the Celtics. The participants were members of a team from Latvia, and if they never play another game they can say that they have experienced the ultimate in officiating. Because I was the referee.

In Munster, this Latvian outfit was scheduled to play the preliminary to the Trotters-Celtics game against what we had been assured was a very good team representing Munster. How good this team was we'll probably never know, because it didn't show up. For one reason or another, the members of our officiating corps, who took turns refereeing such preliminary games, all were absent when game time rolled around.

The crowd was beginning to fret, and the Latvians were growing arm-weary from taking practice shots when I decided that drastic action was in order. I borrowed a

whistle and a pair of basketball shoes and went out to get things started.

I called the Latvian captain aside and, with the aid of an interpreter, told him to divide his squad into two teams. "Before we start," I said, "I want you to know that I haven't refereed a basketball game in eight years. I'm rusty. But I'll be rusty with both teams."

Pat Kennedy is my idea of a good official, so naturally I tried to give the job the full Kennedy treatment. I blew the whistle furiously. I jumped up and down, shook my finger at offending players and wrapped myself around myself to illustrate such cardinal sins as holding. The crowd seemed to enjoy it, and after the Latvian players realized that I wasn't in the midst of a seizure of delirium tremens, they laughed too.

I thought I had done a fairly good job until Rookie Brown, who had caught my performance, asked me casually:

"Isn't there a famous cheese named after this city of Munster?"

"Why, yes," I replied. "Come to think of it, there is."

"Well," said Rookie, "you certainly picked the right town to do your refereeing."

Looking back, I realize Rookie was right. I smelled.

☆ *Midnight in Madrid*

BACK IN THE DAYS WHEN THE GLOBETROTTERS WERE IN search of meal money and a bright new world with universal plumbing facilities, there came a time when even Abe Saperstein—the stalwart leader, the peerless pilot, the unshakable rock—entertained at least the shadow of a doubt regarding the wisdom of his decision to take to the open road.

Crowds had been small and payoffs smaller. The players were on short rations, which meant one hamburger, divided into six portions, three times daily. The tires on both the "club car" and the "baggage car" were wearing thin. But why draw it out? Abe and the boys were stone broke in—and this is no gag—a British Columbia town called Lonesome Woman Gulch.

So as Abe walked back and forth along the main street to keep warm, he poured out his soul to Inman Jackson. Things were bad, he said, and they were bound to become worse before they got better. He didn't mind it himself, he said, but it wasn't fair to expect Jackson and the others to string along. It was an unrewarding situation, he concluded, and he couldn't in conscience ask the players to go on living like desert rats.

Jackson listened politely. When Saperstein finished the funereal monologue, Inman pointed to the snow-covered

mountains in the distance. "Maybe other things aren't so good right now, boss," he said with a grin. "But isn't the scenery wonderful?"

I thought of this anecdote as we rolled into Switzerland and did the usual tourist-type rubber-necking at the Alps. The Harlem Globetrotters now were a million-dollar organization, but the query was the same: "Isn't the scenery wonderful?"

It really was, but the picture of Switzerland that remains brightest in memory is that of Cy Kaselman, slumped in the back seat of the Cadillac, reading travel folders as we passed the world's most beautiful scenery and panoramic views. "I'm improving my mind," Kaselman explained.

The Trotters had been in Switzerland in 1951, and the people who had seen them then evidently had been talking up their wizardry, for everywhere we went we played to standing-room-only crowds. In Basel the Mustermesse Halle was so packed that it was all but impossible for the players to make their way through the aisles to reach the floor. The ensuing game (Trotters 52, Celtics 45) was a scorcher, and the halftime show a crowd-pleaser. As you might expect, the Swiss dote on precision, whether it be in watches, athletes or vaudeville performers. Consequently, well-conceived plays brought off by the Globetrotters and the Celtics were applauded enthusiastically, and Les and Beverly Farris on the trampolin and Ray Wilbert with his hoops earned the Swiss equivalent of bravos.

If there are any clocks or watches left in Switzerland it must be because the shopkeepers in Zurich and Lausanne couldn't get them from the factories in time to sell them to us. When we left Switzerland we all had an abundance of time on our hands. One of my purchases was a four-hun-

dred-day clock, which one of the Trotters suggested was quite fitting.

"It matches that four-hundred-day shirt you're wearing," he explained, and I guess he had something there. I had been wearing the same nylon shirt day after day since leaving Paris, and while I attempted to wash it thoroughly in my hotel room every night, I am by no means a laundress. If I had reached a point that would make a billy-goat reach for the chlorophyll I hadn't realized it, and I tried thenceforth to find a rush-service laundry in whatever city we happened to be.

At Zurich we played in the Hallev Stadion, one of the great centers of Swiss bicycle racing. The floor was erected on the infield of the track, and Pop Gates suggested that if Tatum were there he probably would grab a bike, zip around the oval and announce that he had decided to forsake basketball for bicycle racing. But Goose wasn't there, and the other boys stuck to playing basketball. They may have wished they had chosen the bikes, for it turned out to be one of those nights on which nobody seems able to do anything right. The result was, by American standards, a game several cuts short of technical perfection, but the crowd didn't seem to notice. They were too busy laughing at the Trotters' antics.

The next night at Lausanne nearly everyone had regained his touch, and the game would have pleased the most captious purist. Then, at Geneva, the Trotters hammered the whey out of a Swiss team and the Celtics had almost as easy a time with another local outfit. Far from being downcast, the spectators obviously were thrilled by the realization that their countrymen could score a field goal now and then against the Americans.

Away from the floor, we found the Swiss to be friendly

people with a genuine interest in Americans. In the shops and on the streets many of them sought out the Globetrotters and shook hands. Those who could speak English asked intelligent questions about basketball. I remember one man who told us: "Some day soon, basketball will be the great international sport because the Harlem Globetrotters are making it so." I buy that. And while Abe Saperstein won't go so far as to take credit for spreading the popularity of the game, he is on record as predicting that before the 1956 Olympic Games, basketball will be recognized as *the* world sport.

From Switzerland we went into the south of France, where the "Americans, Go Home" signs came into view again. Yet in Lyon, Bordeaux and Toulouse we attracted large crowds and no catcalls. In Bordeaux several hundred GI's were in the crowd, and when Ray Wilbert experienced some difficulty in manipulating the hoops a GI seated in back of me shouted:

"C'mon, we haven't got all night."

Whereupon another GI yelled: "Take your time, bud. I've got eight more months."

In Toulouse a section of the portable floor gave way during the game, and as carpenters set about making repairs Tony Lavelli roamed through the crowd like a night club entertainer, playing his accordion. The local promoter was worrying out loud about what he would do if the floor could not be repaired and the game had to be called.

"That's easy," I told him. "You tell the people you're sorry, and you give them their money back."

"Give them their money back?" he screamed, horrified by the prospect. "Is this the way you do things in your country?"

"Usually," I said. "And it's the way Abe Saperstein does things everywhere."

Tug Wilson remembers the night one of the glass backboards exploded during a Globetrotter game in Oakland, California. Now you can't replace a backboard, especially one made of glass, in a few minutes. So Abe devised rules for playing with only one board and had the announcer tell the crowd something like this:

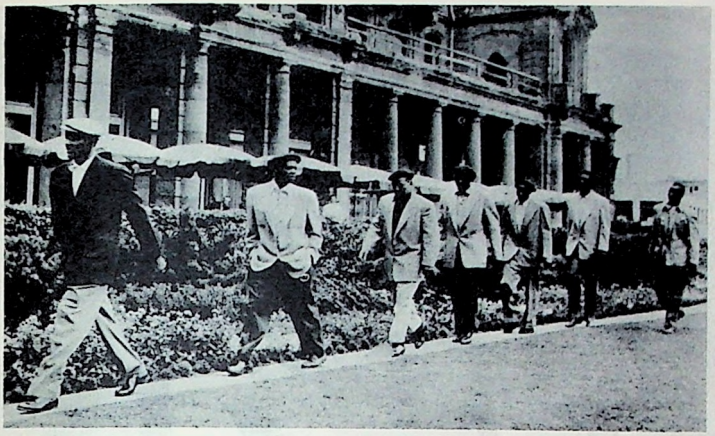
"We will replace the broken backboard as quickly as possible. Meantime the teams will entertain you by playing a special game with one backboard. But if any of you desire to leave before the regular game can be resumed, your money will be cheerfully refunded."

That's typically Saperstein. Abe would rather lose money on a venture than have the customers go away with the feeling that they had been treated unfairly.

Fortunately for the Toulouse promoter's peace of mind, the floor was repaired and the game went on.

By now I considered myself a veteran at the business of handling a troupe on tour, and after six weeks' experience was positive that I had met and conquered every obstacle that possibly could be placed in my path. But when the party reached Spain I realized that any headaches I had endured in the past were of the minor varieties. Because Spain is the Land of the Midnight Start.

Spain is a siesta country, which means that between the hours of noon and 4 P.M. nobody, to borrow the line of the old minstrel man Bert Williams, does nuthin' for nobody nohow. At noon everybody lies down for a nap and puts in four solid hours of sack time, come high water or Franco. As one who has made a hobby of sleeping I am in favor of such a routine, but not when I have the responsibility of



A tour in Cologne

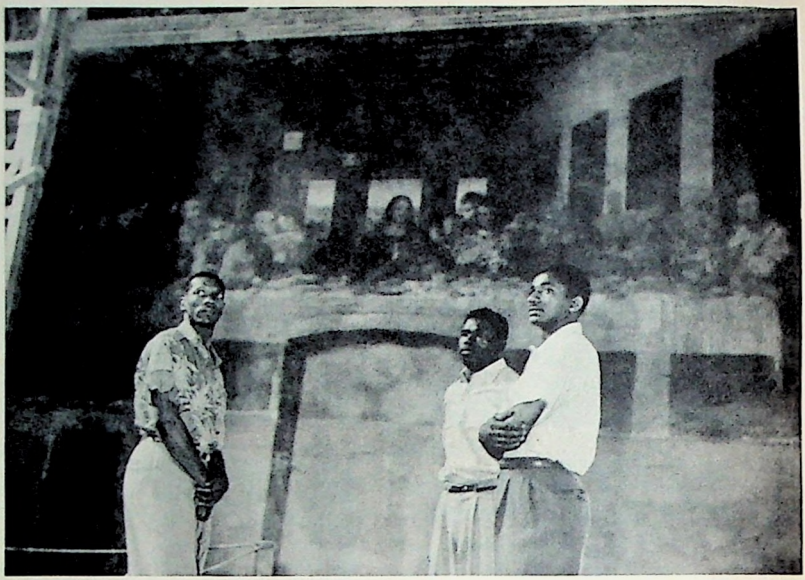


At Frankfort with John J. McCloy, former High Commissioner for the American zone in Germany

Game time at Dusseldorf







Expressions of awe in the presence of greatness

Forty-five minutes with His Holiness, Pope Pius XII







In Madrid. After us . . . the bull



The magic court is cheered from the Alps to the Dardanelles





A giant poster announces our games in Athens

A hilarious camel ride in Cairo



. . . and a pleasant visit with our State Department officials in Algiers



making certain that a group of athletes and entertainers adhere to travel schedules.

Every game we played in Spain began at midnight because, as the Spanish promoters explained, "one cannot expect people to rush through their dinners." This meant that by the time we got back to the hotel after a game it was 3 A.M. or later—and we had to rise and shine at 6 A.M. to hit the road for our next stop. If you never have tried to convince dog-tired professional athletes that they owe it to themselves and their organization to climb out of the hay after only three hours' sleep, you cannot appreciate what I went through.

In Barcelona, Saperstein and Tatum rejoined us, and if the calendar hadn't provided indisputable evidence that this was July 14 I would have sworn it was Christmas—for Abe looked like Santa Claus.

He had brought gifts from the States for everyone, and had lugged along cases of canned foods we hadn't been able to get since leaving home. He even had picked up some of the players' laundry and brought it with him, just like some international deliveryman. He also had brought his niece, Roberta "Sissie" Rose, a young singer who was to be a member of the entertainment unit for a portion of the tour.

The Spaniards made considerable fuss over the Globetrotters, but much more over Abe himself. The newspapers referred to him as "Abe Harlem" and called him "America's greatest good-will ambassador." The opening game of the Spanish phase of our junket was played in the rain in the Barcelona bull ring, and Abe evoked the loudest applause of all from the twenty thousand spectators when he was introduced. Spaniards are great people for rewarding winners of any contest and in Barcelona, as in the other cities where we played, a newspaper had put up a cup to be

awarded to the winning team. The Globetrotters, with Tatum performing as though he never had been away, beat the Celtics, 50–42, and got the hardware.

After grabbing three hours' worth of shut-eye we flew to Palma, on the Spanish island of Mallorca in the Mediterranean, where Hadda Brooks made the error of leaving the hotel to go for a walk. Going for a walk wasn't the error, but her strapless dress was. Seems that the Spanish Government has a rule against women appearing in public with their shoulders uncovered, and every cop in Palma must have converged on Hadda to tell her about it.

The Palma game also was played in a bull ring, and the Trotters beat the Celtics, 40–30, to claim the inevitable cup. The next night—or morning, actually—we were back in Barcelona, where the Globetrotters beat a Spanish all-star team, 70–42, and the Celtics walloped a Barcelona team, 52–30, before another crowd of twenty thousand.

Every thief in Madrid must have marked down July 17 as a red letter day. We arrived in that city at 10:40 A.M. and everybody, with the exception of a few hardy souls who boasted they could get along without sleep, tumbled into bed. When we awakened late in the afternoon, some of us found that our luggage had been stolen from the sidewalk in front of the hotel. While nobody felt like cheering the loss of personal belongings, the most serious theft was that of two big laundry-type bags, each containing eight basketballs—our entire stock at the time.

I raised the roof with the hotel manager, who professed to be saddened by our loss, but said that after all Madrid was a big city and how could he tell where anyone might take sixteen basketballs?

"What if we don't find them?" I bellowed. "How can we play tonight?"

"That I do not know, *señor,*" the manager replied. "But you Americans usually find ways to do things."

These Americans were up a tree. There were less than six hours left before game time, and we were without the principal tools of our trade. I had all but decided to make a desperation call to the American Embassy in the hope that someone there might know of the existence of a basketball somewhere in Madrid when I conceived the idea of checking the police stations.

Amazingly enough, I turned up those basketballs at the first station I visited—about a block from the hotel. Apparently the thief who had lifted them decided that the risk of being nailed with sixteen hot basketballs in his possession was too great and had dropped the bags in an alley. A cop had come along, picked up the bags and turned them in at the station.

Basketballs in Madrid are almost as rare as barracuda in Illinois. I figured that all I had to do was claim the bags, say thank you and be on my way. But it wasn't that easy.

"How do I know that these articles belong to you?" the cop behind the desk asked.

"I'm telling you they belong to me—or rather to the Harlem Globetrotters," I said. "Who else but a bunch of American basketball players would be crazy enough to carry those things around?"

"But where is the proof that they belong to you?" persisted the cop who, as you can see, spoke pretty good English.

He had me there. Both the bags and the balls were unmarked. Then a fit of sheer inspiration seized me.

"Look," I said, "I seem to remember that I put a soiled shirt in one of those bags. If it's there, it will have my nickname over the pocket in blue thread, just like this." I showed him the ZINK woven into the shirt I was wearing.

The cop helped me dig through the bags and there it was —my shirt, with the blue lettering. That convinced him, but only partially. He fired questions at me until I felt like a witness before the Kefauver Committee. Finally he said: "I will let you have these articles, *señor,* if you will sign some papers."

By then I would have signed anything. The cop filled out a fistful of affidavits, not a word of which I understood, and shoved them at me. I grabbed a pen and signed. I may have been confessing to all manner of low crimes, but it didn't matter. I picked up the bags and beat it back to the hotel.

We played in the Plaza de Torres, Madrid's largest bull ring, that midnight, and the seventeen thousand spectators never knew how close they had come to seeing a basketball game played without a basketball.

There was to be a baseball game between Madrid and Barcelona the next day—it began at 10 A.M. so that it would be over, barring extra innings or a drawn-out contest, before the siesta hour. These teams were members of Spain's nine-club "major league," and while they weren't much better than a good high school team back home they still played baseball. Which is why some of us got up early to go to the game. Madrid won, 5–2, and the highlight of the game—to the Americans in the stands, anyway—came in the fifth inning when the first base umpire called a bad one on the home club.

The Madrid manager came charging onto the field in the manner of Leo Durocher. He jawed briefly with the umpire, then jerked his thumb in the general direction of the dressing room. The umpire left the field. Then the manager beckoned to the stands behind first base. A spectator arose, walked down to the diamond and took the place

of the ejected ump. The game went on without a word of protest from the manager of the Barcelona club. We learned later that this is common procedure in Spanish baseball—if you don't like an umpire, throw him out and bring down another from the stands. When Durocher learns about this he won't be long for either the National League or television. He'll be managing in Spain.

That evening we all went to the bull fights at the Plaza de Torres. It was billed as the big event of the season, with six bulls on the card. About the best I can say for it is that it was a gory spectacle. When our games went on at midnight—the Celtics beat a Madrid team, 51–7, and the Trotters took the Spanish All-Stars, 53–22—the blood on the dirt floor of the ring was still red.

From Madrid, Frank Washington drove the Cadillac to Marseilles for shipment back to the States, and the two buses were to follow (with French drivers relieving Spanish bus jockeys at the border) at a more leisurely pace. From now on we were to travel by either train or air until we reached Rome, after which we would be "all air."

There was no way of my knowing at the moment, but another migraine began building up in my noggin when the buses pulled out of Madrid. Most of us had stowed luggage in the vehicles, to be picked up when we reached Marseilles the following week. Claude Overton of the Celtics was feeling pretty good about being able to travel light—until we landed at Lisbon, Portugal. Then it developed that Overton was traveling too light.

He had packed his passport in his suitcase. And his suitcase was aboard a bus which by now probably was somewhere in the Pyrenees.

Before our plane landed at Lisbon I collected the passports, intending to drop them off at the customs office for

checking, then retrieve them when we departed. Routine, I thought. Then I counted the visas. There were thirty-two people in our group. I had thirty-one passports.

"Who's holding out?" I asked. Overton sheepishly explained that he wasn't exactly holding out—he just didn't have a passport.

So I became David Zinkoff, international plotter. "Get right to the hotel," I told Claude. "Lock yourself in your room, and don't come out for anybody or anything. I'll get to the American Embassy after I report to the local officials, and we'll try to straighten this out."

Sure enough, the immigration boys spotted our problem. "According to the passenger list, *señor,*" the officer in charge told me, "there are thirty-two persons in your party. Yet you have given me only thirty-one visas. We cannot find a passport for a *Señor* Overton. It will be necessary for us to take him into custody."

I waxed eloquent. I quoted from the Bill of Rights and made reference to international law. But the officer was unimpressed.

"If a traveler has not a passport, *señor,*" he said, "it is a serious thing. We must ask that you turn this *Señor* Overton over to us."

"Now wait a minute," I said. "I'm going to our Embassy for help. I'll guarantee that Overton won't leave the Hotel Metropole. How about waiting until I get back before you put the arm on him?"

The officer agreed. Off I went to the Embassy.

It was a Saturday afternoon, and the Embassy was all but deserted. A Marine sergeant was on duty, equipped with broad shoulders for people with troubles to put their heads on. I told him my story.

"The person you should see," he said, "is Mr. Wharton.

But Mr. Wharton is spending the week end out of town. He left word, however, to call him if something really important turned up, and this seems really important to me."

Blessings on that sergeant. And blessings on Clifton R. Wharton, the counselor general at the Embassy, who came a-running when the sergeant telephoned him. Wharton was visiting at a country estate about sixty miles from Lisbon and, most of the Portuguese roads being what they are, it took him more than three hours to get back. By the time he arrived I could picture Claude Overton being grabbed by the Portuguese officials and tossed into jail as an international spy.

Wharton went right to work. He called in a stenographer who drew up affidavits in English and Portuguese in which Wharton vouched for Overton as a bona fide member of the Globetrotters' party. Then he accompanied me to the airport, filled out the inevitable stack of papers, presented his affidavits and picked up a temporary visa for Overton.

"Tell that young fellow to grab his passport when you get to Marseilles and keep a tight grip on it for the remainder of your trip," Wharton said with a smile. "It goes easier on an international jewel thief in almost any country than it does on a foreigner without a passport."

Before reaching Marseilles we were to play in Casablanca and Algiers. Wharton cabled the American legations in both cities, asking that arrangements be made to grant Overton temporary visas. This was done. High on my list of American diplomats who come through in the clutch is Clifton R. Wharton.

Overton got out of both the doghouse and his hotel room, and that night we appeared before a roaring crowd of twelve thousand who packed the Pavilhao Prado, a handsome stadium. Instead of the usual forty-minute game,

three twenty-minute contests were played. The Trotters and the Celtics each beat local teams, and then the Trotters beat the Celtics. Portugal was an improvement on Spain in at least one regard—the games there began at 10 P.M. However, unless you possess tin ears, think twice before you decide to attend an athletic event in Portugal. The promoters reason that inasmuch as they have to pay for the use of a public address system, they might as well get a return on their investment. So they sell advertising time, and there is scarcely a moment when decibels aren't being splashed all over the premises. The announcers interlard their regular spiels with commercials, so that an English translation of the pitch made by the announcer at our Lisbon game would go something like this:

"Globetrotter field goal by Gipson . . . remember, for superior taxi service, call the Tip-Top Taxi Company, National 1620 . . . foul on Karstens, Tatum shooting one . . . for the health of your dog, feed him Diego dog biscuits."

And so on, far into the night. I do mean *far* into the night. That Lisbon announcer kept rattling off commercials after the game until the only people left in the stadium were the guys who were cleaning up.

At Oporto the next day a police cordon had to be thrown around our hotel to restrain the crowd that had come to welcome the Trotters. That night we played before another sell-out gathering of twelve thousand, repeating the three-in-one type program, with our clubs whacking the local teams and the Trotters beating the Celtics in the wind-up.

After the game, Saperstein called me aside. "Do you have a hunting license?" he asked.

"What would I want with a hunting license?" I said.

"Well," replied Abe, "you may need one. Tomorrow we

go to North Africa, and that's where Tatum sometimes gets lost. If he disappears, you know who's going to hunt for him, don't you?"

He didn't have to ask. It would be the general manager-traveling secretary-etc. Who else?

☆ *Casablanca to Capri*

LEAFING THROUGH A BOOK ON LITTLE-KNOWN SPORTS ONE day, I was astonished to learn that breath-holding is considered an authentic sporting event in some countries. The idea is to take a deep breath and hold it until you either run out of oxygen or turn purple. The last contestant to gasp for air is proclaimed the winner, possibly after the judges have frisked him for mechanical lungs and other pieces of banned equipment.

I've forgotten what the recognized world record is, or who established it, but I contend that the uncrowned champion is Abe Saperstein. I saw him hold his breath for forty-eight consecutive hours in North Africa—from the moment we arrived in Casablanca until we planed out of Algiers to return to Europe. The reason: Goose Tatum.

Let it be understood right now that Goose was a model of decorum in North Africa, as he was everywhere else we went. It wasn't what Tatum *did* that kept Saperstein in a state of unrest. It was what he *might* do. For Abe had learned during previous visits that of all the places on the face of the earth, Casablanca and Algiers are the ones most likely to bring out the gypsy in Tatum's soul.

One night in Casablanca in the summer of 1950, Tatum failed to put in an appearance for a game. This irked Abe, naturally, but what bothered him more was the possibility

that some harm might befall Goose in a city that after nightfall can be about as rough as the old Barbary Coast in San Francisco. So after the game Saperstein swore in a posse and everybody went in search of Goose.

Around 4 A.M., just when the footsore Abe was about to call off the manhunt, down the street clattered a native hack, drawn by an over-age horse and swarming with Moroccans who obviously were living it up.

"Hey, boss!" came a familiar voice. "Get on board. I'll give you a free ride." There was Tatum, in the driver's seat, grinning down from behind the reins. Goose, it seems, always had wanted to drive a horse-powered taxi and had rented this one for the night. He was, I hasten to add, sober as an Anti-Saloon League member. Tatum has his faults, but the bottle isn't one of them. "Man, I had fun," he told Saperstein afterward. "At first I had a time convincin' people I wasn't chargin' for rides, but after they saw I wasn't kiddin' they nearly broke down that hack climbin' aboard."

In Algiers a few days later Tatum vanished again. This time he was gone for two nights. When he reappeared he reported that he had been roaming around the Casbah. Some people claim that a man lighting a match over an open gasoline tank would be safer than a foreigner in the Casbah after dark, but Goose said he encountered no trouble.

"I got a notion to go there because I had heard so much about it," he explained. "It was very dirty and nasty, but the people were nice."

Since the middle of the regular 1950–1951 season, when he pulled a particularly irksome vanishing act in Denver, Goose has been as faithful to his Globetrotter obligations as a kid who has been promised a new bicycle if he attends Sunday school regularly for a year. After the Denver epi-

sode Saperstein suspended Tatum for two weeks, then shipped him off to one of the Trotter farm clubs for a month. The suspension was galling enough but the relegation to a farm club was such a blow to Goose's professional pride that when he came back to the big team he vowed that thenceforth he would remain on the reservation.

Still, there was the possibility that the urge to wander would return, which accounted for Saperstein's uneasiness in North Africa. It was something like taking a reformed drunk into a bar—the fellow may swear that he'll never touch another drop, but until you see what he does when confronted by the stuff you can't be certain of what he will do. Tatum did all right.

He did all right, too, in the game at Casablanca, scoring twenty-four points as the Trotters bowled over the Celtics, and keeping the crowd in an uproar all the way. They love Goose in Casablanca—and not because he provided free cab rides that night. Their adoration of him stems from another evening in 1950 when Tatum put on one of his greatest clown acts and helped avert what had the makings of a riot.

This was during a Mohammedan Holy Week. According to the ancient code of this predominantly Moslem country, certain high officials are not supposed to appear in public at such a time, but one official wanted to see the Globetrotters. So he showed up incognito, settled down in the midst of his entourage and watched the game.

The Moroccan women in the crowd were dressed in traditional garb, with only their eyes visible. About the best description I can give of such costumes is that they roughly resemble the ghost-type outfits American kids wear on Halloween. I don't like to put the rap on these Casablanca cuties, but midway in the game somebody started to hint

broadly that this official, far from being at home where he belonged, was right there with the common people—and when gossip starts I'm a firm believer in the French admonition to *cherchez la femme.*

Regardless of who started the story, it spread through the stands like the common cold. There was an angry hum, rapidly building up to a roar: What right had this man to defy a holy law? Find him! . . . Let him explain this breach if he could!

People looked searchingly at other people, and about two dozen Moroccans who until then had been proud to bear a close facial resemblance to the official in question suddenly wished they looked like Yogi Berra. No one ever will know what might have happened had the guy been smoked out, because before any serious eruption occurred, someone shouted: "Look!" And everybody looked.

There at one end of the court was Tatum, completely covered by a white sheet. He had poked two small holes through the sheet, and as he walked around the perimeter of the floor, pausing every three or four feet to bow pompously to the spectators, his impish eyes could be seen rolling like a couple of dice.

The official was forgotten as the cries of protest changed to laughter and the people hollered for Goose to do some more cutting up. Since that night this official has been a Globetrotter fan, and if there were a Moroccan chapter of the Goose Tatum Chowder and Marching Society, I have a pretty good idea as to who would insist upon being its chairman.

Tatum's explanation of the motive for and the execution of the sheet act was simple. "I knew there was trouble of some kind brewin'," he said, "so I went downstairs, grabbed this old sheet I had spotted in a storeroom and went back

up to take those people's minds off whatever was botherin' 'em."

It has long been Saperstein's contention that Tatum is a comic genius, a man with an unerring instinct for knowing when to cut loose with a gag. "A lot of people try to be funny," Abe has said, "but they fall flat on their faces because they lack that sixth sense that tells a genius like Tatum precisely the time to punch across a particular caper."

One night in Algiers during the 1950 tour a fist fight broke out in the stands and pretty soon spectators who had no inkling of what the original scuffle was about were punching other spectators, on general principles. Here again Tatum extinguished the blaze. He scampered to the middle of the trouble zone, wearing that big grin, and began pumping hands like a ward heeler. The scuffling ceased, possibly because the combatants didn't want to miss the chance to shake hands with Tatum but more likely because it is difficult for anyone to be in the presence of the great clown—when he is at work, that is—and not be at peace with his neighbors.

There was the time in Dusseldorf when a warm-up jacket was left on the floor just before the beginning of the second half of a game. Tatum grabbed me as I was walking toward the press table and said: "Let's get that jacket off the floor, Zink." I wasn't exactly delighted by his tone, but I'm a Helpful Henry type, so I went out to get the jacket. But there was Goose, two steps ahead of me. He picked up the jacket and held it out toward me. Just as I was about to grasp it, Tatum let it drop to the floor. I did an inward burn, but the crowd was laughing, so I didn't make a Federal case of it. I turned and started to walk away.

"Zink!" Tatum said in a stage whisper. "Take four steps

and wheel around and act real surprised." I took the steps, turned suddenly—and saw Goose, his right hand upraised as if he were about to strike me. I managed the look of surprise and Tatum stood there, hand still raised, with the look of a motorist who has been caught sassing a traffic cop. The spectators howled. Goose had taken a simple situation and drawn two laughs from it.

To get into and out of Casablanca we had to fill out what seemed to be innumerable police forms, and as though that weren't trouble enough, all hands had to be on deck at 5 A.M.—five hours after the game ended—to fly to Algiers. We were shoved aboard an Air France plane with straight-back seats, no food aloft and seven squalling babies whose mothers were blithely oblivious to the caterwauling. Many of the Globetrotters have children and are usually charitable in such matters—but when you're crowded into an airplane for nearly four hours with the crying sounds of infants all but drowning out the roar of the engines, and when you've been short on sleep, it is a stern test of anyone's regard for small fry. I think it speaks well for the self-restraint of the boys that not a single bleat was uttered about the din until after we stepped off the plane at Algiers.

"You know," Josh Grider quipped, "somebody forgot to put the extra games on the schedule."

"What extra games?" I asked.

"With the nursery," Josh said. "That flight was rougher than playing four games in one day."

We stayed at the Hotel Aletti in Algiers, and at the Colisée movie theater next door the Globetrotters' film was packing them in. I thought I detected the hand of Harry Hannin behind this happy arrangement, but Harry disclaimed credit. "That theater manager simply knew a good thing when it fell into his lap," Harry said. Algerians

queued up to get into the theater like New Yorkers waiting to gain admission to Radio City Music Hall during the rush hours. Apparently the effect of the movie upon the Algerians was like that of an appetizer before dinner, for that night at the Velodrome Municipal we played before a capacity crowd of eleven thousand. The Trotters beat the Celtics, 46–36.

Air France redeemed itself the next day, and we flew to Marseilles in style—no babies. Frank Washington was at the airport with the Cadillac to greet us, and we bade a sad farewell to this noble vehicle that had carried us through France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Germany and Spain in style, and now was about to be returned to the United States. But the farewell was a trifle premature, because Abe decided to keep the car in Europe for a few more days.

"We're going to stop off at Monte Carlo," he explained. "You've got to have at least one Cadillac when you go there." So the Cadillac went to Monte Carlo.

In Marseilles, the game was sponsored by the local newspapers. We saw more of the anti-American posters around the city, but the crowd that night was anything but anti-American. In Nice the next night Beverly Farris fainted after the game, giving rise to a cholera scare that turned out to be just that—a scare. Saperstein took no chances. He called in a physician and had every member of the party inoculated against cholera. If the two games we played in Nice were listless, it was understandable.

Marty Glickman, the former Olympic sprinter and now one of New York's leading television and radio sports announcers, dropped in on us at Nice with his wife. The Glickmans were on vacation, and had been practically following us through Europe. "Wherever we went," Marty

reported, "we heard compliments about the Globetrotters. In Geneva our hotel reservations had been gummed up somehow, and I was getting nowhere fast with the hotel manager until I mentioned that I knew Abe and the Trotters. After that, the man all but gave me the hotel."

We made that stop-off at Monaco—or Monte Carlo, its capital city, to employ the more familiar name—but only for sight-seeing purposes. The gambling casinos were going full blast, but we left no pence with them, preferring instead to gawk at Aly Khan. Even without Rita Hayworth, Aly is quite impressive, if only because he represents more money than there is in the world. Another sight to see was that of Sweetwater Clifton, who stands six-feet-six and weighs two hundred and twenty pounds, feeding and pampering a tiny French poodle while the pooch's owner, a stately-looking matron, beamed approval. The Globetrotters make friends on all levels, from dogs to dowagers.

For our first appearance in Italy we played in San Remo on a clay tennis court under a portable lighting system so dim that it was difficult to see across the court. Just outside the property was a huge tree, which looked like any other tree until Abe advised me to stroll to one end of the court for a closer inspection.

I took a look. The tree was loaded with men, women and children who had paid the owner of the property four hundred lira (about seventy cents) apiece for the privilege of perching there to watch the game.

It was at San Remo in 1951 that Saperstein lost his temper for one of the relatively few times in his life. The then King Farouk and Queen Narriman of Egypt were vacationing there, and Abe was his usual obliging self when the Queen came to the game that night. During the first half Narriman sent an emissary down to the bench to inform

Saperstein that she would like to have a program autographed by Abe and the Trotters.

Abe devoted two time-out periods to having the boys write their names on a program. Then he affixed his own signature and at halftime walked toward the royal box. Before he got to within fifty feet of same, however, he found his way blocked by four husky characters, one of whom asked him in effect: "Where do you think you're going?"

"I have this autographed program for the Queen," Abe said. "I am going to present it to her."

"No, you're not," said the strong-arm guy.

"Look," Abe said, "the Queen asked for this. All I want to do is hand it over to her."

"But you do not do things like that," the guy said. "If you wish to present anything to the Queen, you will give it to us. Then we will give it to one of the Queen's attendants, who will present it to the Queen."

That did it. The bomb went off. Abe tossed the program to an ordinary spectator, who to this day probably doesn't know what he did to deserve such a gift, and sputtered: "You tell the Queen's attendant to tell the Queen for me that the next time she wants an autographed program she can come and get it herself. And she can bring her own pen!"

We saw Farouk during the world tour, on the Isle of Capri, which we visited on a one-day excursion from Naples. By then he was an ex-King, and his Queen was getting ready to leave him.

We were having lunch with Ella Logan, the musical comedy star, when Farouk, clad in bathing trunks and wearing dark glasses, walked by, heading toward the beach. It would be straining the truth to say that he is portly.

"He looks like Ernie Dusek," I said. Abe grinned.

"You've given me an idea," he said. "If I have time before we leave, I'll call on him and offer to take him to the United States on a wrestling tour. He'd be a terrific attraction."

Abe didn't get around to making the offer. But when and if Farouk ever comes to this country as a wrestler, remember that the seed of the idea was planted on the Isle of Capri.

☆ *The One-Man Audience*

SHORTLY AFTER OUR RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES, ABE Saperstein became something of an author by relating our experiences during the tour to Bill Fay. Bill put together the words for an article in *Collier's*.

In his article Abe said that the most memorable audience of the entire world tour was also the smallest—in fact, the smallest in Trotter history. It was just one man—Pope Pius XII.

If every member of our party were polled to determine the most outstanding personality we encountered on the trip, I am certain that the Pope would be the unanimous choice. Fewer than half of us were members of the Roman Catholic faith, but all of us came away from our audience with His Holiness spiritually refreshed and with the knowledge that we had met one of the great men of our time.

We were in Rome, playing a three-day stand, when word came that the Pope would grant us an audience. He had received the Globetrotters the previous summer, and as he almost never grants audiences to the same groups or individuals two years in succession, there had seemed little likelihood that we would see him again.

But on the night of July 31 we were informed by the Papal Secretary that His Holiness would grant us an audience the next morning at Castel Gandolfo, his summer

home, eighteen miles from Rome. I had no difficulty getting the party out of bed that morning. Everyone was up and ready to go long before eight o'clock, when we boarded a chartered bus and set out for Castel Gandolfo.

We were ushered into the audience chamber, at one end of which sat His Holiness on a throne placed on a dais. He was attired in a white *vestis talaris,* or cassock, a small white zucchetto, or skull cap, and red shoes. He smiled as we entered, then stepped from the dais and walked toward us with energetic strides. It is not belaboring the English language to say that he exuded graciousness, kindliness and simplicity.

The Pope passed from person to person, talking briefly with all. The Catholics in the group knelt and kissed his ring, while the non-Catholics shook hands with him. His handshake was firm. His Holiness inquired about the national extraction of each of us, and if it developed, for example, that a person was of German ancestry and could speak the language of his forebears, the Pope chatted with him in German. Before he completed the round, His Holiness had conversed in English, Italian, German and French. Nearly all of us had brought holy medals with us to be blessed. When the Pope got to me I held out four medals. "Your Holiness," I said, "I am not a Catholic, but I would like to present these medals to four Catholic friends when I return to the United States."

"Thank you, my son," His Holiness said. "You are most thoughtful."

The Pope gave the entire group his blessing, then returned to the throne. Saperstein stepped forward, holding a new basketball. "Your Holiness," he said, "you have honored us greatly. As a small token of our appreciation, we would like you to have this basketball, autographed by every

member of the Globetrotters." The Pope accepted the ball and examined it closely.

"I have heard so much about the Globetrotters and the good work they are doing," he said. "But I never have seen them play. In fact, I never have seen a basketball game, and I confess that I am curious about it."

"Would Your Holiness like to see a small demonstration?" Abe asked.

"I would like very much to see it," the Pope replied.

"Would it be all right if we put it on right here?" inquired Abe. His Holiness said it would.

"Then," Saperstein said, "if you will lend us that basketball for a few minutes, we will do our best."

There ensued a scene the like of which never had been witnessed before in Castel Gandolfo. Rookie Brown, Babe Pressley, Leon Hillard, Clarence Wilson and Josh Grider doffed their coats and formed a circle in front of the Pope. Then someone pointed out that the recording of "Sweet Georgia Brown" was back in Rome, and that the circle routine would lack its usual zip without musical accompaniment.

"That's no problem," Saperstein said. "The rest of us will whistle the tune and clap our hands in time to the rhythm."

The show began. The slick new basketball was difficult to handle and the five performers obviously were a bit stage-frightened in the presence of the most distinguished spectator before whom they ever had played, but the act went off well. I noticed, however, that His Holiness seemed to be having difficulty seeing. So I walked to the foot of the dais and addressed him.

"Wouldn't Your Holiness be able to see better if you were down on the floor?" I inquired.

"I think so," replied the Pope.

"All right," I said. "We'll move your throne down to the floor."

"But that would be too much trouble," His Holiness said.

"No trouble at all," I answered. "Here, a couple of you fellows give me a hand." And we moved the throne down to the floor.

The circle act was started again, and this time the Pope saw everything. The ball was moving like a projectile, the whistling and the hand-clapping were loud and sincere, and when I looked at His Holiness I could see one foot extended from beneath his cassock—and that foot was tapping the floor in rhythm!

When the routine was completed, Saperstein asked the Pontiff whether there was anything else he would like to see. "Yes," replied His Holiness. "I would like to see these young men go through this once more." There followed the only encore the Trotters ever have given of the circle act.

"My, how clever these young men are," His Holiness remarked. "If I had not seen this with my own eyes I would not have believed it could be done."

When the demonstration ended, an official Vatican photographer came in, and we posed for photographs with the Pontiff. Because of the size of our group we had to line up in two rows for the picture, with His Holiness in the middle of the front row, and the people in the back row asked that another photograph be made so that they could move to the front. His Holiness agreed. "I have learned," he said with a smile, "that Americans always want 'just one more.' "

Our audience lasted forty-five minutes, and Saperstein will tell you proudly that when the Duke and Duchess of

Windsor called on His Holiness immediately afterward they stayed only eighteen minutes.

We really didn't need the bus to carry us back to Rome after our visit with the Pope. We could have flown back under our own power. All of us, Catholics and non-Catholics, left with a great feeling of exaltation.

In Milan, where we were scheduled for two games before going to Rome, we encountered a situation that stymied even Saperstein. We had played in driving rain, near-freezing temperatures and blistering heat. But when we reached Milan we found that the Velodrome Vigarelli, Italy's most perfect bicycle stadium, where we were scheduled to play, had been all but inundated. Excessive rain had left six inches of water on the infield, and while this might have been an opportunity for the Globetrotters to establish a claim to having played in at least a partially filled swimming pool, Abe canceled the game.

So we sat around in the hotel, engaging in bull sessions which, believe it or not, were concerned more with basketball than with some other subjects I could mention. I once heard Jack Pyle, a Philadelphia radio commentator, say that the athletes who leave their mark on any sport are the ones who not only play the game well but never tire of talking about it. That's how it is with the Trotters. They'll talk basketball with you as long as you have sufficient breath to keep up the conversation.

We were barbering about this game and that one in my room when Tony Lavelli came in. Eventually, the talk got around to a question that has been asked wherever basketball is played: just how good are the Harlem Globetrotters?

"Only a fellow who has played against them can answer that," Lavelli said. "I never realized what kind of a coach Abe Saperstein is until he invited me to work out one day

with a bunch of Trotter rookies. I had always thought of the Globetrotters as just a group of tricky ball-handlers, and I had thought of Abe as merely a promoter-coach who sits on the bench for the appearance value.

"Brother, was I wrong! After spending two hours in that workout I realized Abe is one of the keenest coaches of fundamentals I've ever seen.

"He coaches simple, sound basketball, but it is effective. On offense he gives his boys very few moves, but he makes sure they master them. On defense the Trotters have the most unique system in basketball. They take chances and make defensive plays that would cause the average coach to tear his hair. The Trotters are like a nest of bees buzzing in your face. When one player is taken out of a play, one of the others will switch over and cover the mistake. I've never seen a switch system as effective as that used by the Trotters. It combines the best elements of zone and man-to-man defense.

"Saperstein is more than a coach. He is a sensitive psychologist who understands each of his players and gets the most out of his manpower. I think that if a lemon could run, Abe would suit it up and squeeze out some basketball ability."

Along the same line, I once asked the late Lou Sugarman, one of basketball's most outstanding referees for more than a quarter-century, whether he felt that the Globetrotters could have beaten the Original Celtics, the great team of the Twenties, which still is regarded by many experts as the greatest of all time.

"I hate to admit it, being an old-timer myself," Sugarman said, "but I think the Globetrotters would have won more games than they lost in a series with the Original Celtics." Also, Dutch Dehnert, a member of the Original

Celtics, has said that he believes the Trotters could have beaten his old team. For the record, Dehnert went to work for Saperstein a few years ago as an instructor of Globetrotter rookies, and it has been suggested that this might have influenced his opinion. However, Dutch is a forthright person and it is likely that he was leveling.

By their own admission, some of the college players on the All-Star team that played the Trotters in the 1953 World Series of Basketball thought they were going to have a fairly easy time of it. This was by far the best College All-American team yet assembled for the Series, as witness some of the standouts:

Ernie Beck, of Pennsylvania, who made every All-American team in 1953; Jack Molinas, of Columbia; Dick Knostman, of Kansas State; Larry Hennessey, of Villanova; Ron Feiereisel, of DePaul; Ken Flower, of Southern California; Irv Bemoras, of Illinois; Richie Regan, of Seton Hall, and Norb Lewinski, of Notre Dame. A team such as that, coached by Ray Meyer, of DePaul, and Honey Russell, of Seton Hall, figures to be terrific. And it was.

Yet the Globetrotters won fourteen of the twenty-one Series games, even with Tatum available for only limited duty. "They're wonderful," Ernie Beck told me after the Series. "I played against some great competitors in college, but those Globetrotters are simply beyond description."

We were able to play on our second night in Milan and attracted a capacity crowd of eleven thousand to the Velodrome. Then we flew to Rome for the three-game series outdoors at the Foro Italico. There, one of the group found a cablegram from his wife awaiting him:

"If you stay away one more week," it read, "I will stay away forever."

See what I mean about problems? Far be it from the

Globetrotter organization to break up a marriage. I purchased a ticket home for the guy and put him aboard a plane.

We saw anti-American signs throughout Rome, but we were given nothing but wholehearted applause by the spectators at the games. Two of the three nights we played to capacity crowds of thirteen thousand each and probably would have sold out on the third night except for the fact that rain began to fall just before game time. Even so, we drew eight thousand.

The Italian Communist press covered the games and praised the Globetrotters' performances, although studiously avoiding any mention of the background of the team. This marked probably the first time that any American function in Rome didn't take a panning by the Commies. "How can they rap it?" an American businessman living in Rome commented. "They'd only look foolish to their readers."

Our last night in Rome we were entertained at dinner by Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker at the U. S. Embassy. Then we took the Ambassador with us to the stadium, where he threw in the first ball. Naturally, Abe presented the ball to him. During the tour we handed out about a dozen basketballs to dignitaries, which meant that every time Abe flew home on business and rejoined us a few days later he had to bring a half-dozen or so basketballs with him.

From Rome we hopped to Tunis where we played two games on a red clay tennis court at the Pepiniere Municipale. The players found it somewhat difficult to dribble and confined most of their activity to short, snappy passes. The Trotters won both games from the Celtics, and just about the only real excitement during the two-day stay came on the second night when Les and Beverly Farris euchred me into climbing up on the trampolin to help turn the rope

for Les' rope-skipping act. The trampolin kept bobbing up and down and I was so hard pressed to maintain my balance that I looked like a drunk who had wandered into the place by mistake. The crowd apparently thought this was part of the act, and laughed accordingly.

"Keep it up," Les said between skips. "You're killing 'em."

"Yeah," I gasped, "and if I keep it up much longer I'm going to kill myself."

Finally I lost my balance and went boom onto the clay. The spectators thought that this was very funny, but I can't say that I did. Still, I suppose the true artist must endure all manner of hardships for his public.

In Naples two days later we experienced the only near-calamity, aside from the usual injuries that occur now and then in a basketball game, of the entire tour. Rather, Rookie Brown experienced it, and, as had been the case with Lester Johnson in Wheatland, Iowa, many years before, everyone else stopped breathing until it became apparent that Rookie hadn't bruised more than his dignity.

We played in the Nostra Oltremare Arena, which once had been the San Carlo Opera House. Our portable floor had been shipped from Naples to Hong Kong after the Rome engagement, and the promoter in Naples had assured Abe that he would provide a suitable floor for the game. This proved to be made of plywood and was laid over the old orchestra pit.

This was the Globetrotters' first appearance in Naples, and both teams came up with a rip-roaring performance that set the demonstrative Neapolitans to cheering wildly. First the Trotters would pull ahead. Then the Celtics would catch them. Late in the game, with the score tied at 30 (the Trotters finally won, 42–38), Brown drove in toward the

basket for a lay-up and suddenly disappeared from view. A section of the floor had given way beneath him and Rookie fell seven feet to the stone flooring of the orchestra pit.

We fished Rookie out of the hole and found that he was unhurt. Like the fans in Tunis who had laughed at my unintentional antics on the trampolin, the Neopolitans thought that falling through the floor was part of the show. "Get that," Brown said as we frisked him for fractures. "I almost broke myself up, and those people think I did it on purpose."

A quick repair job on the floor made it possible for the game to go on to its conclusion, although no player on either team ventured within ten feet of the repaired section. The game wound up with a furious exchange of long shots, and when the final whistle was blown the fans tossed cushions into the air to show their approval. We had to have a police guard to ward off the Neapolitans who crowded around the dressing room door after the game to inform the Globetrotters in shrill voices that they should return to Naples soon and often.

"We'll be back," Saperstein told the Neapolitan promoter. "But please tell your customers that one of my boys isn't going to go down a hole in a basketball floor every time."

Aboard the bus which carried us to Rome, where we were to emplane for Athens, Greece, a horrible thought suddenly struck Rookie Brown.

"Suppose I hadn't been in possession of the ball when I fell through the floor," he said. "Nobody might have seen me fall. And maybe ten years from now somebody in Abe's office would ask, 'Whatever became of Brown?'

"And somebody else might say, 'Brown? Let's see. Haven't

seen him since Naples in 1952. Come to think of it, there was a hole in the floor at Naples. Maybe Brown fell into it. Next time we go there, let's take a look.'

"Brother," Rookie concluded, "am I glad I had the ball when I took that dive!"

☆ *Sixteen Pounds of Drachmas*

UNDOUBTEDLY THE GREEKS HAVE A WORD FOR IT. I DON'T know the word, but the gesture impressed me, as it did the other members of the party. For when we stepped from our Trans World Airlines plane at the Athens airport at 6:40 A.M. on August 6 there were several hundred Greeks bearing gifts of flowers to greet us.

A Harry Hannin production, I thought. But it wasn't. "Some of these people have been here all night," an airport official told us. "They said they had been hearing about the great American sports team for a long time and they wanted to greet you when you landed."

They did. Every one of us was practically covered with flowers when we got into taxis and went to our hotel.

It is dangerous to form opinions about anything on the basis of two days' experience with it. However, I came up with three definite impressions of Athens: Greeks may be good cooks, but this is one city that really is hurting for a good restaurant; inflation (the drachma, the Greek monetary unit, is worth one fifteen-thousandth of a dollar) has all but wrecked the economy, and the Greeks—the ones we met at least—are deeply grateful to the United States for the economic aid we have given them.

On the streets and in the hotels the Globetrotters were greeted enthusiastically. The Greeks seemed to have the

impression that all American athletes are super-muscular, and it was a common occurrence for a citizen to approach a Trotter and politely request permission to feel his biceps. One such citizen told Josh Grider: "Now I shall boast to my children that I have touched one of the world's greatest athletes." To which the flustered Josh could reply only: "Who—me?"

When we checked in at the King George Hotel the desk clerk was as flustered as a college boy who has just upset the punch in the lap of the dean's wife. "The American Globetrotters!" he exclaimed. "It is an honor. I have been saving my money so that I could purchase a ticket to see your game. And now here I am, serving you." I told the clerk not to let it carry him away.

We were booked for two afternoon games on an asphalt court which had been hurriedly constructed in a soccer stadium. But the sun was hot, and quickly turned the asphalt into goo. "I've seen a lot of things in my time," Saperstein said, "but this is the first melted basketball court I've ever looked at. We'll postpone the game and play it at ten o'clock tonight. Same thing tomorrow night."

For the next seven hours one of the Athens fire companies hosed the hot asphalt with cold water. That congealed it. Then, just before game time, workmen spread a special powdery absorbent, similar to the material the Navy uses to make the footing better for men working on a slippery deck, over the surface, sopping up the water. The eleven thousand spectators—a capacity crowd—all were in their seats by the time the floor was pronounced fit for play.

So what happened? Five minutes after the game began, the rains came—but heavily. No amount of water absorbent would have helped. Abe called a time out. "Here we go again, boys," he said. "Break out the rain jackets and hats."

The game went on, and I am not stretching the truth a fraction of an inch when I say that by the end of the first quarter the court was covered by a full inch of water. The players removed their shoes and splashed around in their bare feet.

At halftime even the Athenian promoter was willing to call it a night. "We cannot expect you to play under such conditions," he said. Abe shook his head and pointed to the crowd. There were no empty seats visible.

"Those people," Saperstein said, "were nice enough to go along on the postponement of this afternoon's game. They came to see a game tonight, and as long as one of them remains in the stands we're going to play."

The game was completed, with the Globetrotters winning, 47–33. The fact that the teams could score a total of eighty points in that slop always will be a source of wonderment to me.

We toured the ruins of ancient Athens the next day and, as you might expect, paid special attention to the old Olympic Stadium. It is a narrow structure, and could be fitted into one end of a modern stadium. I suggested to Abe that what the place needed was a good promoter to restore it to its former eminence. "Why don't you take a lease on it?" I asked. Abe went along with the gag.

"I might be interested," he said, "if the landlord would permit me to remodel to suit."

That night we got a better break in the weather. The asphalt had melted again during the day, but it responded to the cold water treatment and the sky was clear. Another capacity crowd showed up, among them John E. Peurifoy, the United States Ambassador to Greece. After the game, won by the Globetrotters, 39–31, the Ambassador came down to the dressing room to say hello.

"I can't tell you what a job you've done here in two days," he said to Abe. "The Greeks are fine people and they appreciate what our country is doing to help them get back on their feet, but even they must wonder about Americans in general sometimes after listening to the ceaseless propaganda put out by the Communists. Now you have brought the Globetrotters here and shown how things are with average Americans. All of us at the Embassy are in your debt."

At two o'clock the next morning I saw a banker's dream walking. Into the hotel came Saperstein, lugging a large package, wrapped in newspapers. He caught my quizzical look and grinned.

"Get a load of this, Zink," he said. "This is the heaviest payoff the Globetrotters ever have received." In the package were sixteen pounds of drachmas—103,907,000 drachmas, to be exact—our share of the two-night gate receipts. In our money that amounted to about $6900, which by normal Globetrotter financial standards isn't much of a take, but the size of the package delighted Abe. "I suppose it's because it reminds me of the first game the Globetrotters ever played, in the Loyola University gym in Chicago when I got a five-buck note, and here I am twenty-five years later with sixteen pounds of currency in my arms."

I helped Abe sort the drachmas. Placed in stacks, the paper money, ranging in denomination from one hundred to ten thousand drachmas, made a pile three feet long, two feet wide and two feet high. We placed the currency in a cardboard box, and before Abe and the Trotters left for Istanbul, Turkey, a few hours later, Saperstein took the drachmas to a bank.

I say before Abe and the Trotters left for Istanbul because the party traveled in two sections on that hop. I went with

the Celtics and the entertainers aboard a National Greek Airlines plane and the Globetrotters followed four hours later. There was a brass band to greet us at the Istanbul airport, and I had the doleful task of informing the musicians that we weren't the celebrities in the party, but merely the supporting cast. Either those Turks were being paid by the hour or they were determined to give Abe and the boys a proper greeting, because they hung around the airport until the Trotters arrived.

Before going to an outdoor stadium which wasn't equipped with lights, necessitating our playing twilight games, we visited a statue of Kemal Ataturk, the first president of the Turkish Republic, in Taksim Square and laid a wreath thereon. At the stadium we found long lines of prospective customers waiting patiently to buy tickets. Not all of them got in because the gates had to be closed when the stands were filled to their eight thousand capacity.

Above the stadium rippled three flags: two Turkish and one American. The fans gave both teams an ovation when they came onto the floor, but promptly threw their allegiance to the Globetrotters when play began. The Trotters responded by putting on one of their top-drawer comedy performances, which didn't hamper their scoring. They beat the Celtics, 47–34.

The newspapers broke out the superlatives to describe the antics of the Trotters, and the next evening the lines of would-be customers were even longer.

By some electronic quirk, the stadium public address system got onto the wave length of an Istanbul radio station, with the result that music was wafted over the crowd during the game. The climax came when a recording of "C'mona My House" blared through the amplifiers and the Globetrotters whipped the ball around in time to the music.

"Look at that," Saperstein said. "If they put on a funeral march next, this will be the slowest game you ever saw."

That night I went without sleep. Abe was leaving for the United States the next day and I had to draw up daily income reports for him to take back to his Chicago office. "You look a little tired, Zink," Abe remarked as he accompanied us to the airport to see us off on our flight to Lebanon.

"I'm not tired," I said. "I'm dead. Why I ever let you talk me into taking this job I'll never know."

"Now, Zink," Abe said, "you know you're getting a liberal education. When all this is over you and I will go off somewhere and do a little fishing."

"What am I going to use for strength?" I countered. "I couldn't even haul in a minnow, the way I feel now."

As Sid Skolsky says, don't get me wrong. I had fun on the trip, even if it did wear me down. And that repartee with Saperstein was a morale-booster, as we both knew. You can be so tired that you're ready to chuck everything, but when Abe tickles you up in his somewhat oblique way, you're ready to go again.

We flew from Istanbul to Beyrouth, Lebanon. The city has a population of about three hundred and fifty thousand, and at least half of that number must have turned out to welcome us. Our party was placed in a dozen private automobiles and driven through the principal streets of the city to be cheered by Lebanese who jammed the sidewalks. Then we went to the United States Legation to be entertained at a garden party given by Harold Minor, the U. S. Minister to Lebanon.

A stadium had been built on the outskirts of the city especially for our two games. It had a fine wood floor and

three thousand individual chairs for spectators, with prices ranging from three dollars to four-fifty in American money. The Lebanese Army Band played both national anthems before the games and everything was strictly big league, except for crowd control. Some overzealous ticket-seller had sold more tickets than there were seats, and there were minor riots both nights. Cops ran around blowing whistles just like a Mack Sennett comedy, but it took our entertainers to bring real order out of chaos. The Lebanese liked the basketball, but they doted on the vaudeville show. So whenever things threatened to get out of hand, we halted the game momentarily and put on the vaudeville acts.

Beyrouth marked the debut of Leon Hillard as a singer. Leon is such a capable dribbler on the basketball court that he understudies Marques Haynes—and does so well that one of these days he may surpass the master—but his ability as a singer wasn't known until we were riding the buses through Europe during the first phase of the world tour. Just for fun, Hillard began to sing to the accompaniment of Tony Lavelli on the accordion and when Saperstein heard him Abe nearly flipped.

"How long have you had a voice like that?" Abe demanded.

"I don't know," Hillard replied. "I guess I've always had it."

"What's the idea of keeping it a secret?" Saperstein said. "If you can sing like that in front of an audience, you're going to be in the show. We'll build you up into another Billy Daniels."

Hillard and Lavelli rehearsed during their spare time for weeks. Finally, in Beyrouth, Lavelli gave me the word: "Leon's ready," he said. "He'll be a sensation." So we took

the wraps off Hillard, who proceeded to make a good prophet of Lavelli. Remember how the bobby-soxers of the war years went for Frank Sinatra? Then along came Billy Eckstine and, most recently, Eddie Fisher. Hillard's singing had approximately the same effect on the Lebanese girls. He was a smash, and from then on every performance included songs by "Leon Hillard, the singing Globetrotter." Of course, no man can be a hero to either his valet or his teammates, which accounts for the "Groaning Globetrotter" tag hung on Leon by the other players.

We left Beyrouth reluctantly. The Lebanese had gone to great lengths to make our stay pleasant, and it's always difficult to say good-by to such people. But I suppose our reluctance was based more on apprehension of what lay ahead of us in Cairo. Before leaving Europe we had been advised to bypass Egypt because of the unrest there, but with Saperstein a contract is a contract. We went to Egypt.

We spent the first day in Cairo worrying. There were rumors that demonstrations against us were planned, and in my mind's eye I could see newspaper headlines back home: "Globetrotters Victims of Anti-American Riots." But then came the game at the Gezira Sporting Club, with the silently hostile crowd that shed both silence and hostility when the Trotters began clowning, and after that we had it made.

The next day Captain Ahmed Selah, of the Egyptian Army, telephoned me at the Semiramis Hotel to say that he had been assigned to our party as an aide. "For any service you desire," he said, "I am at your beck and call."

The overnight change in attitude was almost unbelievable. Egyptians who yesterday had glared at the Globetrotters now smiled at them. The newspapers, whose stories on the Trotters had been terse, broke out with enthusiasm.

On the sides of buses in Cairo appeared large signs, plugging both the Globetrotters and an airline:

TROTT THE GLOBE WITH ORIENTOURS
LIKE THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS!

That spelling of "trot," incidentally, is the Egyptian version, not mine.

The manager of a movie house telephoned to ask that the Globetrotters make a personal appearance that afternoon. Perhaps in the interest of good public relations I should have sent the boys hustling to the theater, but I felt that rest and relaxation were more important to them. I turned down the request. Captain Selah assured me that I had done the right thing. "After looking at your itinerary," he said, "I cannot understand how your players can maintain the pace. I certainly agree that they should not be saddled with extra burdens."

The captain took us to the Pyramids and the Sphinx. We wrapped scarves around our heads, Arab style, as protection against the searing sun, and some of the more daring souls rode camels. Pop Gates was tossed for a five-yard loss by a camel. The beast was lying down, and Pop climbed aboard, blissfully unaware that riding a camel isn't like riding a horse. A horse, like most four-footed animals, gets up from the ground forefeet first. A camel elevates its stern first—and with considerable speed. Pop's camel did just that—and Pop sailed over its head and landed face first in the sand. I'll give Gates one thing, though. He's a gamester. He came right back, and this time he stayed aboard the camel.

A camel driver urging his charge on sounds like a high school cheerleader. The magic words are "chicka-chicka-boom," and they are repeated again and again. The camel driver also is an astute businessman. Technically you pay

your "fare" to the attendant at the camel station before you set out, but the driver, who is on salary, usually manages to collect something extra for himself. Seems that he can regulate the gait of his camel so that the ride will be more or less comfortable. No sooner are you out of earshot of the attendant at the station than the driver says: "You take care of driver, yes?" If you say yes immediately, you get the smoothest ride possible. But if you delay in making your decision or resolve that you are going to pay nothing extra, chances are that you will prefer to eat your meals standing up for several days thereafter.

We posed for photographs before the Sphinx and the Pyramids, and for a study in contrast we drank bottled Coca-Cola at the base of the Sphinx. It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, one of the few which I, personally, was able to devote to having fun. Captain Selah was an obliging guide and if it had been up to him, I think we could have brought one of the Pyramids home with us.

That night we played our second game at the Gezira Sporting Club, which is a well-kept football stadium. The Globetrotters beat the Celtics, 44–36, before another capacity crowd, and after the game we were entertained at the Helmia Palace, a night spot which used to be frequented by Farouk. The owner knocked himself out to welcome us. Outlined in neon above the orchestra stand was "Harlem Globetrotters." The sign had been made and delivered before the political upheaval in Egypt, and the owner had all but resigned himself to not being able to display it. But there was the sign, and there we were, which again shows what a few laughs can do.

We flew to Alexandria for a two-night stand, then returned to Cairo by train for our final game in Egypt. The Globetrotters were to play the Egyptian Olympic team in a

twenty-minute game, then meet the Celtics in another twenty-minute contest.

The first inkling I had that this was more than just another evening of basketball came a few minutes before the start of the first game. An Egyptian Army officer came to the press table and inquired of Captain Selah as to who was in charge of the Globetrotter group. The captain introduced the other officer to me.

"General Naguib presents his compliments, sir," the officer said, "and asks that you join him at your convenience." He nodded toward a box at courtside.

There was General Mohammed Naguib, the premier of Egypt, the "strong man" who had led the revolt against Farouk, surrounded by members of his staff. He saw me gaping at him like a schoolgirl and smiled.

"Let's go," I said to the officer. "If it's convenient for the General to send for me, it's convenient for me to meet him."

I spent the first game with Naguib. He is a soft-spoken man but his personality is electric. We talked briefly about conditions in Egypt. "There is much to be done," the General said quietly, "but we will do it." Most of the conversation, however, was about basketball and the Globetrotters. Naguib expressed regret that Abe Saperstein was not with us.

"Your Mr. Saperstein is a great man," he said. "By sending his team here he has shown our people a side of American life they perhaps did not realize existed. I know that the impact the Globetrotters have made will be good for both our nations."

The Globetrotters played it cute in the first quarter of their game with the Egyptian Olympics and were leading by only 14–13 at the end of the period. This made Naguib hopeful but not optimistic. "I am a realist," he told me. "As

you Americans say, our team lacks the guns to keep up with your Globetrotters." He was right. In the second period the Trotters cut loose and won, 39–18.

At the conclusion of the game, Naguib shook hands and took his leave. "I hope we shall meet again," he said. "Perhaps some day we will have a team that can give you more competition. Interest in basketball in our country is spreading, and your team has done much to heighten that interest."

In the second game, the Trotters almost were booby-trapped. The Celtics jumped into the lead at the start and remained in front until the last three minutes, when field goals by Hillard, Grider and Buie enabled the Trotters to win by 19–17. "Let's have no more of these twenty-minute games against the pros," Hillard said afterward. "Man, if you have a bad first period, it's murder, trying to catch up."

At midnight we had a parting of the ways. Pressley, Gates, Woods, Robinson, Clifton, Sissie Rose and Sally Baudendistal boarded a TWA plane bound for New York. Ronnie MacGilvary, of the Celtics, was sick in bed at our hotel and would fly to New York when strong enough to travel.

The rest of us were getting ready to fly to the Far East. By the time we finished packing it lacked only an hour and a half of departure time. So we decided against going to bed. After all, who needs sleep when he's working for Abe Saperstein?

☆ *Monsoon Country*

ACCORDING TO THE PLAN ADVANCED BY SCANDINAVIAN AIRlines, which carried us out of Cairo, the flight to Bangkok, Thailand, was to be made in easy stages. The flight was made in stages, but they weren't easy.

First we landed at Basra, Iraq, and although we remained there only long enough for the plane to be refueled, we had to fill out immigration forms. Item No. 1 was "Religion," and I wrote "Hebrew." When I turned the form in the official who examined it looked up at me.

"You say you are a Hebrew," he said. "Is that correct?"

"Certainly," I answered. "So what?"

"It is a regulation," he said, "that we detain transient Hebrews for questioning. Do you understand this?"

I didn't understand it, but I didn't have time to fight a holy war. "O.K.," I said, "you win. Give me the form." I crossed out "Hebrew" and wrote "Believer."

"There," I said, handing the form back. "How's that?"

"That is satisfactory, sir," the official replied. "You may rejoin your party."

From Basra we flew to Karachi, Pakistan, where the Korean boxing and weight-lifting teams, en route home from the Olympic games, boarded the plane. The next leg of the flight took us from Karachi to Rangoon, Burma, and almost put an end to Tony Lavelli's musical activities

for the balance of the tour. Somewhere over the Burmese interior we ran into rough weather. The plane was buffeted like a leaf in the wind and many of the articles inside that weren't lashed down were flung around. One such article was Lavelli's accordion. I guess Tony was so thankful to be in one piece himself after the plane leveled off that he forgot about opening the case and examining the accordion. It wasn't until he attempted to tune up before the first game in Bangkok that he found that the instrument would emit only a faint wheeze.

Something was jammed in the accordion as a result of the beating it had taken on the plane. Tony worked manfully to repair it, but finally gave up in despair. "Looks as though I'm out of business," he said. Then Leon Hillard, who by then had sung so many songs to the accompaniment of the instrument that he had almost come to regard himself as its co-proprietor, tinkered with it. If his next month's pay check depended on it, Leon couldn't tell you what he did, but whatever he did restored the accordion to reasonably good health.

At the Rangoon airport we entered a lunchroom ("Today's Special: Shark Fin Soup") for coffee and immediately the Globetrotters were set upon by waiters and bus boys, clamoring for autographs. Inasmuch as the Trotters never before had been to the Orient and weren't scheduled to play within two hundred and seventy-five miles of Rangoon—hence no publicity build-up in the area—such interest in the team by these Burmese was puzzling.

"Why the rush for autographs?" I asked one waiter. "What do you know about the Globetrotters?"

"We read about these basketballs in the papers," the waiter replied. "We read how they come all the way from America to show people in Siam how they do. Anybody

come all the way from America to play game is big stuff, you bet."

At Bangkok we were met by Kuo Pong, the promoter, who kept saying "Ah, is much trouble," even after he learned that the Wat Don Stadium was sold out for the two nights of our stay; Peter Lim, a kindly old gentleman who was an exporter and who could discuss American sports more intelligently than a lot of Americans I know, and Bill Davis, an American connected with the Bangkok office of the Coca-Cola Corporation. Throughout the Far East, incidentally, that old Dixie nectar, Coca-Cola, is a big deal. In Bangkok it seemed that every other vehicle was a Coca-Cola truck. If this sounds like a plug for Coke, it is. The Coca-Cola people have worked closely with Saperstein and the Globetrotters in recent years, particularly in connection with the annual World Series of Basketball, at the conclusion of which they present handsome trophies to the winning team and the outstanding players in the Series.

Pong, Lim and Davis reported that Bangkok was steamed up over the visit of the Globetrotters. It was steamed up over something, for the temperature at midday was 105, and the humidity was high. This was the beginning of an involuntary weight reduction program by all the players. During the next two weeks the boys lost from ten to twenty pounds each. If Hollywood ever decides to remake *The Thin Man,* J. C. Gipson could play the title role to perfection after a couple of weeks of playing basketball in Thailand, the Malay States and the Philippines. Gipson normally carries two hundred and eight pounds on his six-foot-eight frame, which makes him look skinny enough, but after we completed our engagement in the Philippines he was down to one-ninety and looked like a man who had been on a hunger strike.

"I can't understand it, Zink," J. C. told me nearly every day. "I'm eatin' like a horse, but I go on losin' weight. Maybe there's somethin' wrong with me." I always assured him that there was nothing wrong, and called his attention to the other players who were dropping poundage.

"Yeah," Gipson would say, "but they can stand to lose weight. Me, I got so many bones stickin' out that some night I'm goin' to stab somebody with one of my ribs when we're jumpin' under the basket."

Thailand—or Siam, if you prefer the old name—is a pleasant nation. The people are industrious and there appears to be little squalor. My personal observations, of course, were limited to Bangkok but Americans living in Thailand, some of whom traveled great distances to see our games, told me that the capital city is a good mirror of the entire country. By and large the Siamese are pro-western and anti-Communist, although the Commies are working hard to make inroads. They have delivered the usual pitch about the white westerners who are determined to subjugate the colored races, and I suppose they have attracted some attention.

But here were the Globetrotters in Bangkok, staying at the well-appointed Pacific Hotel, and if this looked like subjugation to the Siamese I suppose a lot of them decided they were in favor of it. The way the Communists try to explain away the Globetrotters in most cases is to wait until a week or so after the team has moved on and then begin claiming that the Trotters are Negroes who have been released from bondage temporarily because of their ability to play basketball but who will be returned to servitude when they no longer can run fast enough to satisfy their capitalistic bosses. I doubt that even the most unenlightened person in any

country, once having seen the Globetrotters, can swallow this—but the Commies keep trying.

Basketball is a mushrooming sport in Thailand, there being about fifty teams in Bangkok alone. Until recently, there were practically no Siamese playing the game, most of the players being Chinese. However, the Bangkok Basketball Federation, headed by Phya Chin Rarak, is doing a good job of encouraging greater participation by the native Siamese.

A concrete floor had been specially constructed at the Wat Don Stadium for our games, and while this was hard on the players' legs there were no casualties. We played to capacity crowds of seven thousand both nights. The first evening's action was carried on in a fine mist, but after the heat of the day it was more refreshing than troublesome. Edwin Stanton, the U. S. Ambassador to Thailand, tossed up the first ball for the Trotters-Celtics game after the Celtics had beaten a Bangkok team, 19–8, in a ten-minute preliminary. In the feature contest, the Globetrotters won, 38–17. Despite the dampness, the halftime show was well received—the crowd was quiet, which in Thailand, as in most Oriental countries, indicates approbation—and Peter Lim was moved to term it "the best show we ever had here."

The next evening storm clouds were gathering over the stadium as play began. The Trotters and the Celtics were scheduled to play local teams in abbreviated contests, then face each other in a twenty-minute game, but because of the threatening clouds, Promoter Pong suggested that we might desire to dispense with the preliminaries. He put it up to me.

It may sound sophomoric, but in such cases I always asked myself: what would Abe Saperstein do? Accordingly,

I came to the conclusion that it would be unfair to deprive the Bangkok fans of the opportunity to see their teams play the Americans.

"We'll gamble on the weather," I told Pong. "Let's try to get the whole program in. If we all keep our fingers crossed we may get away with it." Pong said, "Ah, is much trouble," and the first game began.

The Celtics beat the Bangkok Tigers, 13–3, and the Globetrotters took the Bangkok Eagles, 21–4. Then our teams lined up at the center of the court and a nifty dish who was introduced as "Miss Thailand" presented flowers to each of the players. When she got to Tony Lavelli a Siamese tradition was smashed. In Thailand public displays of affection are frowned upon, but Tony was so taken by the appearance and manner of "Miss Thailand" that he grabbed her and hung a movie-style kiss on her. From where I sat it appeared that "Miss Thailand" enjoyed it as much as Lavelli. So did the crowd.

The Globetrotters won the feature game, 29–22, and only a minute or so after it ended the rains came. "Ah, is much trouble," said Pong for the umpteenth time.

"What do you mean—trouble?" I asked. "We got everything in, didn't we?"

"Ah, yes," replied the promoter, "but the people on the way home will get wet. Then they will think of me as the one who causes them much discomfort."

Pong gave a dinner for us that night. On the menu were such items as shark fin, fried rice, goose feet in wine sauce, sunfish and pickled lichee nuts. After the meal each of us was handed a perfumed washcloth for the face and hands.

A crowd of several hundred Siamese saw us off at the airport when we boarded a Cathay Pacific Airways plane for Singapore the next day. This was an open date on the

schedule, so we checked into the Raffles Hotel and caught up on sleep. Everybody but me, that is. The general manager-traveling secretary-etc. spent the day making up reports and counting the hours until Saperstein would rejoin the troupe.

The next morning we flew via Malay Air Lines to Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of the Malayan Federation, where Jack A. Gertz, the U. S. Vice Consul, met us. Coming off the plane, Ray Wilbert handed his suitcase to Gertz. "Here, boy," Wilbert said. "Carry this for me." It was a rib, of course, and Gertz went right along with it. "Certainly, sir," he said, taking the bag. "And if I can do anything else for you, don't hesitate to ask."

We were entertained at a luncheon by the Malayan Basketball Federation, whose president, Siew Khai Wie, made a speech of welcome. "We are confident," he said, "that basketball soon will be the universal sport. Great strides have been made here toward promoting the game, and we are grateful to basketball's greatest team for coming here."

Later there arose another of life's little problems. We were to play in a stadium at the Kuala Lumpur Fair Grounds seating three thousand people. But an overly ambitious promoter had sold six thousand tickets for the game. All the tickets had been sold (the scale ranged from six to ten dollars in Malayan money) in two days, and scalpers now were getting twenty dollars apiece for ten-dollar tickets. "What shall we do?" the promoter asked me. "If I cannot satisfy all those who have tickets it will go hard with me."

To enable the guy to save face, I agreed that we would play a doubleheader. The first three thousand people to get into the stadium would see the opening game. Then the

stadium would be cleared, and the other ticket holders would be admitted for the second game. It turned out, however, that the promoter lost face after all, because a torrential downpour began at the outset of the first game, making a morass of the dirt floor.

We limited the first game to four five-minute periods and called off the second game. The fortunate three thousand got their money's worth. The Trotters won, 29–22, and Pat Kennedy panicked the onlookers with his officiating. The mob scene after the game was a sight to behold. There were three thousand satisfied but drenched customers leaving the stadium and three thousand unhappy and drenched people, who insisted that they were going to see a game, trying to get in, and when the two forces met head-on fights broke out all over the place. The two hundred police who had been assigned to the stadium were unable to control the crowd and reinforcements had to be summoned from downtown.

We flew back to Singapore the next day to begin a four-game series. A banner headline on the sports page of the Singapore *Standard* proclaimed: THE FABULOUS 'TROTTERS ARE HERE. I particularly enjoyed one paragraph of the story that followed: "What really struck the first Singaporeans to see them as really fabulous was their shirts. The lanky American Negro cagers, who expressed their greeting in one word—'Hi-ya'—sported shirts that were knockouts, a technicolor dream and, to put it mildly, stupendous."

We played at the Happy World Stadium, an auditorium with concrete walls and a tin roof. The stadium seats eighty-five hundred and was sold out for all four nights. And on all four nights we were hissed.

The spectators laughed at the clowning. They shouted and clapped their hands to express their appreciation of

good plays. But when a player did something that really sent them, they hissed. In Singapore, hissing is the highest form of applause. When eighty-five hundred people hiss together the sound is overpowering. Time after time the Trotters and the Celtics halted play to gaze in wonderment at the stands.

On opening night at Happy World, the Celtics played the Singapore Colony's champion team, Nanyang Siang Pau, and beat them, 34–14, in a twenty-minute game. The Singapore players were fast and handled the ball well, but they displayed a reluctance to shoot.

In the second game, played in two fifteen-minute halves, the Trotters beat the Celtics, 32–22. The next day's newspapers printed such comments as: "Basketball that could only be described as fantastic . . . the ultimate in basketball skill, in spite of the clowning that disguised most of it . . . a full offering of side-play and extras which make the Trotters' show so complete . . . Tony Lavelli took time off from his basketball to coax beautiful music from his piano accordion . . . the thrill of seeing Josh Grider drop the ball into the basket while riding pick-a-back on Bill 'Rookie' Brown . . . a great demonstration by America's ambassadors-at-large."

The Singapore Chinese Amateur Athletic Federation gave a luncheon for us at the Goo Loo Club, an organization of Singapore Chinese. Goh Keng Siew, president of the Federation, presented us with a banner as a memento of our visit and called the Globetrotters the "greatest American missionaries of good will." Charles F. Baldwin, the U. S. Consul General in Singapore, who entertained us later at his home, said he was certain our visit would do much to cement good relations between Malaya and the United States.

Baldwin did the honors with the first ball that night at Happy World, and the Globetrotters—well, as the Singa-

pore *Standard* sports reporter wrote: "Lesson two on how to play basketball and keep eighty-five hundred fans excited and thoroughly entertained was given by the Harlem Globetrotters last night." The Trotters beat the Celtics, 58–50, in one of the best-played games of the trip.

The following day, as I wrote in my diary, happiness reigned again. Saperstein flew in from the States, bringing with him Marques Haynes, Bob Hall, a young Globetrotter from Detroit, and Renny Brooks, a jive singer from Honolulu. As usual, Abe brought gifts for everyone. Only this time he received gifts in return. He had not been with us in Germany when he celebrated his fifty-second birthday on July 4, so nearly two months later in Singapore we gave him a party.

We also gave him a sterling silver tray, on which was inscribed "Welcome, Traveler." The inscription also included the names of Abe's wayfarers. I committed the blooper of the party. Each of us presented Abe with a small individual gift, and mine was a set of cuff links. It wasn't until after Saperstein thanked me for them that I realized he wears only short-sleeved shirts.

"Never mind, Zink," Abe said when I apologized. "Maybe some day I'll go formal."

The Globetrotters won the last two games in Singapore, beating the Celtics in the regularly scheduled contests, and easing by a Singapore all-star team, 25–20, in a twenty-minute game hurriedly arranged for the final night. In four appearances we had attracted thirty-four thousand spectators and probably could have doubled that number had there been a sufficiently large hall available.

In a downtown Singapore movie theater *The Harlem Globetrotters* film was being shown to standing-room-only audiences. In the entrance way to the theater was a large

sign: BEWARE OF PICKPOCKETS. I called this to Abe's attention.

"What do you think of your movie playing in a place like that?" I asked. "Isn't it somewhat degrading?"

"Not at all," Saperstein replied with great dignity. "Haven't you heard that the Harlem Globetrotters appeal to all classes of people?"

☆ *Messages for Home*

WHEN I WAS STATIONED IN ICELAND DURING WORLD WAR II, three of the nicest people in the world did something for me —as well as for many other GI's—that I've never forgotten. The nice people were Bob Hope, Marlene Dietrich and Isaac Stern, the great violinist. They came to Iceland to put on shows. When they returned to the United States, each telephoned my parents to tell them that I was well and as happy as any warm-blooded American could be in Iceland.

Those messages meant a great deal to my father and mother, and I resolved then that if ever I got the opportunity to perform a similar service for other GI's, I would make a sort of repayment to Hope, Stern and Miss Dietrich.

I was given that opportunity while touring with the Globetrotters. From every place we played where American servicemen and women were stationed I brought home messages for parents, wives, children and sweethearts. In all I delivered one hundred and twenty-three messages, either by telephone or in person. It was a heart-warming experience and sometimes a poignant one.

There was the young soldier I met in Berlin. He came to our hotel the day of the game at the Olympic Stadium and asked for me. "I read in *Stars and Stripes* that you were from Philadelphia," he explained, "and I thought I'd look

you up, seeing as how we're practically neighbors back home."

The GI hailed from Easton, Pennsylvania, about sixty-five miles from Philadelphia, and we spent a pleasant half-hour chatting about the A's, the Phillies and the Warriors. Finally I asked the boy how much longer he would be in Germany. "About another year," he said. "I'm just a recruit over here."

"Look," I said, "would you like me to call your parents when I get back? That won't be for another three months, but at least I'll be able to tell your folks that I talked with you in June and that you're doing fine."

"Golly," the kid said, "that would be wonderful. Mom and Dad would sure appreciate it. And so would I."

"O.K.," I said, "give me your telephone number in Easton. I'll call your folks the day I reach Philadelphia."

It was October 8 when I made the call. A masculine voice answered, and assuming that it was the soldier's father I addressed him by name.

"This isn't Mr. So-and-so," the voice said. "This is his son." It was the kid whose message I was delivering!

"Well, how do you like that?" I said. "Here I call up to say hello to your parents for you, and I find you beat me home. What'd you do—wangle a furlough?"

The boy's voice was husky. "Not exactly, sir," he said. "My father died last Monday, and they gave me emergency leave to fly home for the funeral."

I made another call to Collingdale, Pennsylvania, to deliver a message from a sailor I had met on Guam. En route home from San Francisco I had stopped in Chicago to appear with Wayne Griffin on his telecast of the wrestling bouts from Rainbo Arena, and when the father of the boy for whom I was calling answered the telephone I

heard him say, "Mama, it's him! It's the man we saw on television. Johnny said he would call." And the gentleman promptly went to pieces.

His wife came to the telephone and explained that their son had written home, saying that a fellow named Dave Zinkoff was going to call and tell about seeing him on Guam. "Then," the lady said, "we saw you on television the other night and we felt as though we knew you."

We had a nice talk, the mother and I, but the father wasn't able to regain his composure in time for me to chat with him. Later he wrote me, apologizing for breaking down. "It was just the thought," his letter said, "that I was talking with someone who had been with our boy, whom we haven't seen in more than a year." He needn't have explained. I know how such things are.

In Stuttgart, Germany, a GI from Philadelphia asked me to telephone his parents. I said I would, and to show his appreciation the kid made a half-dozen informal photographs of me during the game with an expensive camera he was carrying. "I'll send you the prints," he said. I said thanks and forgot about it. When I returned home I called the boy's family and marked down another mission completed.

On March 12, 1953, I was at the Philadelphia Arena watching the Globetrotters play when a young man handed me an envelope. "Here are your photographs," he said.

"Photographs?" I replied. "What photographs?"

"The ones I made of you in Stuttgart," the youngster said. "I wanted to give them to you personally and apologize for delivering them eight months late. And I wanted to tell you how much your telephone call meant to my parents."

A few days later I was announcing a college doubleheader at the St. Joseph's College field house in Philadelphia

when another youngster came up to thank me for having telephoned his family. He had been with the military police of Cheju Island, Korea, a prisoner of war camp, and was in Japan on leave when the Globetrotters played there. "My mother told me," the kid said, "that talking with you about me was almost as good as talking with me. Thanks a million."

There was one woman in Camden, New Jersey, whom I had to telephone three times before I could get her son's message across to her. The first two times she broke down and sobbed. The third time she had control of herself, and I was able to tell her that her sailor son on Johnston Island was doing well.

"God bless you for being so patient with a silly woman," she said. "You are doing a wonderful thing."

I told her that I was only doing what someone else once had done for me.

One GI in Tokyo asked me to nose around his home neighborhood in New York to determine whether or not his fiancée was remaining true to him. The kid had received disquieting letters from his brother, repeating rumors that his girl friend was cheating on him. I told the GI that I wasn't a one-man Gestapo, but that I would be glad to carry a message to the girl.

"O.K.," he said, "you tell her that if I come home and find out she's been running around, I'll pin her ears back for her."

When I delivered the message, I simply telephoned the girl and said that her soldier boy sent his love and hoped to be home soon. The Zink may not be the smartest person around, but he knows better than to get mixed up in a lovers' quarrel.

In Yokohama, Japan, I enjoyed a reunion with Manny

Gordon, who had been a buddy of mine in Iceland. Manny now lives in Yokohama, where he works with one of the U. S. economic recovery agencies, with his wife and two sons. On my return to Philadelphia I not only telephoned Manny's people but also called his wife's father, who operates a jewelry store in the Woodland Avenue section of the city. For the last five years I have been the master of ceremonies for the annual Woodland Avenue Business Men's Association Halloween parade, which usually is viewed by upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand people. Last Halloween I was gabbing into the microphone on the reviewing stand when a distinguished-looking gentleman came up to shake my hand.

"Thank you, Mr. Zinkoff," he said. "Thank you very much."

"What for?" I asked.

"For telephoning me the other evening," the gentleman said. "My wife and I have been walking on the clouds ever since."

The gentleman was Mrs. Manny Gordon's father. If I weren't trying to avoid being trite, I'd say it's a small world.

The greatest wallop I derived from delivering messages came when I called the mother of a soldier with whom I had talked in Hamburg, Germany. The boy had written home that I was going to call, and the mother was prepared for me.

"My son tells me that you are with the Harlem Globetrotters and that you can do anything," she said. "I would like you to do something for me. Get my boy out of the Army."

I had to beg off on that one. Not even the Harlem Globetrotters have that much drag with the Department of Defense.

☆ *Jungle Arena*

A STORY IS TOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES ABOUT A MAN AND wife who after fifteen years of wedded bliss suddenly split up. When someone asked the man to explain the split he said: "She roots for the Manila Aces. I like the Manila Stars. So how could we go on living together?"

Probably this tale is apocryphal but it isn't far-fetched. The Manila Stars and the Manila Aces are basketball teams —two of the approximately four hundred basketball teams that play the year round in Manila. Every team has its loyalists, and arguments over their relative merits have set husband against wife and bartender against consumer. For of all the people in this world who are daffy over basketball, the daffiest are the Filipinos. You hear a lot about the frenzy of high school basketball in Indiana, but it doesn't compare with the Philippines. Basketball is more than a game there —it's almost a religion.

We jumped from Singapore into this hotbed of basketball. It was raining hard when we landed at Manila International Airport, but there must have been at least two thousand Filipino school kids to bid us welcome. This reception definitely had the touch of Harry Hannin, who would be staying in Manila with us for a few days, and I told Harry so. "O.K.," Harry said, "so we did arrange to have the kids here. But there wasn't any inducement aside

from the chance to say hello to the Trotters. It's 5 P.M., remember, and most of the schools let out around three o'clock. None of these kids got out of classes for this. They came because they wanted to see the team."

A motorcade with a police escort carried us to the City Hall where Mayor Arsenio H. Lacson officially welcomed us to the city. "It has been difficult to concentrate on official duties during the last few days," the Mayor said. "My entire staff seems to have been talking of nothing but the arrival of the Harlem Globetrotters, and I must admit that I, too, have been looking forward with eagerness to your visit."

Ted Lewin, the promoter, had booked us for nine nights at the Rizal Memorial Stadium, a ten-thousand-seat pavilion, but the demand for tickets had been so great that he prevailed upon Abe to give two afternoon performances. For every game seven thousand reserved seats were sold in advance and people stood in line all night for the three thousand general admission seats. Starting time in the evenings was 7:15, but the general admission tickets went on sale at 3 P.M. and within thirty minutes every seat in that section would be filled. To prevent general admission tickets from getting into the hands of scalpers all ticket holders had to enter the pavilion immediately, take seats and remain in them.

The day of our first game Abe went out to the Stadium in mid-afternoon and found three thousand people already in the stands. "What's this?" he asked Lewin. "Is somebody playing here this afternoon?" Lewin said no, these were the general admission people for the game that night. Abe shook his head. "They must be balmy," he said.

"When it comes to basketball," Lewin replied, "they are."

You may have wondered how Saperstein went about

setting up the Oriental phase of the tour. In Europe, North Africa and the Middle East the jumps were relatively short and it was easy to establish a schedule. But in the Far East the hops were long, and there was the even greater problem of making the right contacts in what amounted to virgin territory.

Nearly two years before the tour Saperstein commissioned Leo Leavitt, a Honolulu promoter, to investigate the possibilities of the Trotters' playing in the Malayan Federation, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Formosa and Japan. Leavitt did the spadework and reported back to Saperstein.

Then Abe flew out with his attorney, Allan Bloch, to make contractual arrangements. As an old Philadelphian I usually employ the term "Philadelphia lawyer" as a synonym for astuteness at the bar, but I am willing to concede that Bloch, a Chicagoan, is at least the peer of any Philadelphia lawyer I've ever met. In this instance it was Bloch's job to draw up contracts that would insure against some local promoter's deciding at the last minute that he had bitten off more than he could chomp on and pulling out of the deal.

After the schedule was arranged, Leavitt and Harry Hannin went to work arranging details: hotel accommodations, ticket sales, publicity and promotion. Pan American World Airways co-operated with other airlines in working out travel schedules. Long before the tour began every angle of it had been brought as close to perfection as human brains, hands and perspiration possibly could bring it.

Saperstein, in my book, is a double-barreled genius. He not only can bring off monumental deeds himself but he has an unerring faculty for selecting the right people to assist him. Moreover, he abides by their judgment. Promoters throughout the world have told me that they can deal with

Abe's agents secure in the knowledge that Saperstein will back them up.

I had only one objection to the arrangements Leavitt and Hannin had made for us in Manila. In drawing up the room list at the Bayview Hotel, Harry had put himself in with me. Now I like Hannin, but not as a roommate. Harry is so thorough a businessman that he leaves word wherever he goes that if some difficulty arises the person in that difficulty should feel free to telephone him immediately, regardless of the hour. It's surprising how many people in how many places get into trouble at unholy hours. Our telephone jangled through the night, and good old Harry offered sage counsel to every caller. I got very little sleep during the nights Hannin was in Manila.

On opening night at the Rizal Stadium, the house lights were turned off when the time came for the Globetrotters to take the court. Wearing luminous gloves, the boys ran onto the floor one by one as I introduced them via the public address system. When all had reached the center of the court, the only things visible in the entire arena were the Globetrotters' hands. Then the house lights came on, and the Filipinos nearly blew a gasket cheering the Trotters. Elpidio Quirino, President of the Philippine Republic, threw out the first ball from his courtside box, to the accompaniment of cheers unmistakably overtoned by a chorus of boos. At this point Mayor Lacson leaned over toward me and said dolefully: "There goes my flood control program." The crowd reacted happily when Marques Haynes presented the President with an autographed basketball.

Haynes and Tatum quickly established themselves as the darlings of the Manila fans in the game—Haynes with his dribbling, Tatum with his assortment of capers. The Trot-

ters beat the Celtics, 63–48, and the next day the Manila sports writers let their typewriters run away with them. Sample quotes:

"The Globetrotters came, they saw and they conquered—conquered the hearts and admiration of the fans . . . the razzle-dazzle Negro cage wizards put on a show that the ten thousand lucky people who saw them will never forget . . . Filipino fans will find it hard to shake off their wonder and amazement, even long after the Globetrotters have left these shores."

The Trotters won the next three games from the Celtics, one of which was opened by Mayor Lacson tossing up the first ball. If His Honor had been embarrassed by the mixed response President Quirino received on opening night he must have found consolation in the thought that he was in big-time company, because some of the fans gave him the old horn, too.

One afternoon we held a basketball clinic at the Stadium for ten thousand boys and girls from the Manila public and parochial schools. The kids ate it up. Because they wanted to get across to the youngsters that you can't clown in anything unless you first have mastered fundamentals, the players stuck to straight basketball, demonstrating shots, dribbling and passing. After the session I talked with one boy who had been most impressed by Haynes' dribbling demonstration. "That Number 30," the kid said. "He's some good dribbler."

"Yes," I said, "he is. He's just the greatest in basketball history."

Haynes is the fellow who begins where the other star dribblers stop. He has so delicate a touch that he can execute a dribble only one inch off the floor—the ball smacking against the floor makes a rat-tat-tat sound not unlike that

produced by a machine gun. Also, Mark is so agile that he has been known to keep the ball away from two or three opponents for as long as two minutes. He dribbles behind his back, on his knees, lying down—in almost every conceivable position—without missing a beat. As basketball players go these days he is a small man, standing six feet and weighing one hundred and seventy pounds, but he is a well-rounded performer who not only can bounce a basketball with the touch of a concert violinist but can score heavily with either hand. In the 1953 World Series of Basketball he led the Trotter scorers with two hundred and ninety-one points in twenty-one games.

Dribbling seems to run in the Haynes family. Mark's older brothers, Joe and Wendell, were good dribblers when they played high school basketball in Sand Springs, Oklahoma, and later at Langston University. Wendell was Mark's junior high school basketball coach in Sand Springs, and after leading the Sand Springs High School team to the state championship, the kid brother took Wendell's advice and matriculated at Langston. In four years there he was the leading scorer of a team that won one hundred and twelve of one hundred and fifteen games, including a victory over the Globetrotters. Haynes scored twenty-six points in that one, and Saperstein signed him when he graduated in 1947.

In a Globetrotter game against the Minneapolis Lakers in Chicago in 1948, Haynes suffered a broken back. He was in a cast for six months and it was thought that his basketball career was at an end. But Mark came back to play better than ever.

Haynes is a soft-spoken man who in street clothes looks more like a young business executive than an athlete. He earns about twenty-five thousand dollars a year with the





The Japanese love basketball—as shown by the crowds, the action, and a four-story-high poster of Tatum at Osaka

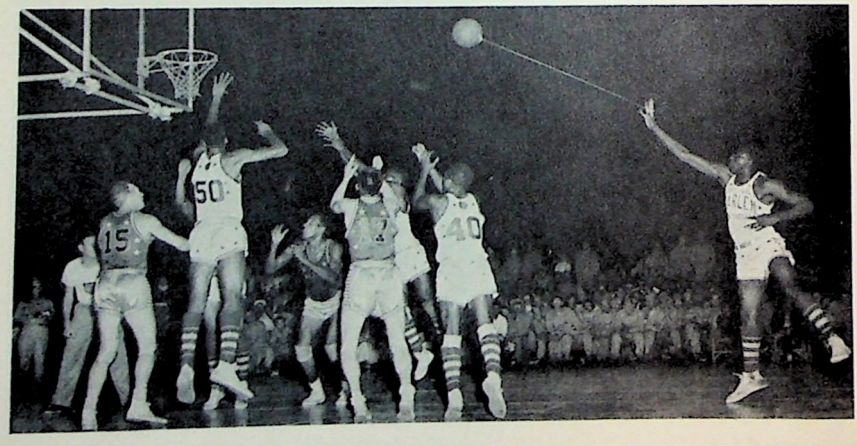






Action at Yokohama

. . . and Tokyo





A refreshing pause in Hong Kong



In Manila we ring the bell

en route to the Philippines





Walter Dukes gets a tall view of
Buckingham Palace, London

A gift of gratitude to Abe Saperstein



The Golden Gate—and home at last



Globetrotters, and while he is evidently confident of his abilities he has an appealing modesty. A few years ago a high school teacher in Oklahoma wrote to Marques, explaining that he had assigned one of his classes to compile scrapbooks of biographical material on famous leaders of the Negro race in America.

"You will be interested to know," the teacher continued, "that one student, whose collection included portraits of George Washington Carver, Booker T. Washington, Marian Anderson, Walter White and Ralph Bunche, among others, placed on the cover of his scrapbook a picture of you, lying on the floor dribbling a basketball."

I like the reply Haynes made to that letter. "I am not unappreciative of the honor this boy has seen fit to pay me," he wrote to the teacher. "But I think that if youngsters are getting that far off the track evaluating the importance of things, maybe I'd just better forget the fancy stuff."

On the fifth night in Manila the Globetrotters and the Celtics tangled for the first time with Filipino teams. The fans, with an optimism born of enthusiasm, had assayed the performances of our teams and had decided that some of the local clubs were a better than bad bet to lick either the Trotters or the Celtics once or twice. The Filipino clubs never came close to winning, but there were no signs of discouragement. The principal handicap of the Filipinos when they run into opponents from the West is lack of size. They move the ball well—one Manila player, Ponchiano Saldana, is as good a floor man as any the Trotters ever have played against—but they don't have the altitude to battle for rebounds. And it is axiomatic that the team that controls the backboards wins the game.

The Celtics opened up by beating the National University, 61–40, in a fifteen-minute game—real firehouse

basketball—and the Trotters thumped the Prisco team of Manila, 50–24, in another fifteen-minute contest. Then, in a twenty-minute game, the Globetrotters beat the Celtics, 41–29, as Boyd Buie scored eighteen points. Buie was turned loose with instructions to shoot as much as possible for a very good reason. Twelve amputees from one of the Philippine Army hospitals—veterans of the Huk campaign—were our guests, and Saperstein figured it would give these men a lift if they saw the one-armed Buie enjoy a big night.

According to our original schedule for the Philippines we were to have a day off on September 4. But a man named J. Amado Araneta changed that. He approached Abe with one of the most fantastic offers the Trotters ever have received.

"I own sugar plantations on the island of Negros, two hours by air from Manila," he explained. "For many years I have heard about the Harlem Globetrotters, and now that you are in the Philippines I would like you to come to our community, Bacolod City, and play a game for our people."

"Sorry," Abe said. "We're booked tight. We have only one open date, and I want the boys to rest. Maybe next time."

"But *Señor* Saperstein," Araneta persisted, "who can tell when 'next time' will be? I want you now. I will pay you five thousand dollars plus expenses."

"You'll lose money," Saperstein said. "Do you realize what the expenses will amount to? You'll have to transport thirty people and equipment."

"That is fine, *Señor* Saperstein," said the planter. "Bring all the people and all the equipment. Also, bring the Manila sports writers. This will be a big day in Bacolod City."

Abe agreed to play. So on the morning of September 4,

players, entertainers, staff members and sports writers climbed into three chartered planes and away we went to Bacolod City.

Araneta owns eight sugar plantations on Negros and employs ninety thousand people. He had declared a holiday in celebration of the coming of the Globetrotters, which probably marks the first time in history that ninety thousand workers were given a day off to look at a basketball team. Bacolod City experienced its first traffic jam as we were driven through the streets in open cars to be cheered by Araneta's employees.

Araneta had built a mahogany basketball floor for this one game. He had cleared out a section of the canebrakes on one of his plantations and had thrown up bleachers seating twelve thousand around the floor. The place looked like an arena that had been dropped into the middle of a jungle. Araneta also had sold tickets at ten to twenty-five pesos each (five dollars to twelve-fifty), bringing him a gross of about thirty thousand dollars.

The game was scheduled for 3 P.M., but shortly after noon it began to rain. It wasn't a drizzle. It was a torrent. But by 1 P.M. the "stadium" was packed. Abe expressed it best to Red Smith after we returned home, and Red quoted Saperstein this way in his New York *Herald Tribune* column:

"Here was this torrential downpour and here was a crowd of twelve thousand people jammed into a clearing, just waiting, soaked to the skin, to see a basketball game. That's how berserk they are in the Philippines about this game of basketball. Never in any State of our nation have I seen such enthusiasm."

The downpour continued, and along about three o'clock Saperstein said to Araneta: "We can't play basketball in

this. Why don't we get up early tomorrow morning and try to play then?"

"No, no," said Araneta. "That will not be necessary. The rain will cease at about five o'clock, and you will be able to play about six."

Araneta was a good weather forecaster. Shortly after five the rain stopped, and at six we were able to play. The Celtics beat a local team in a ten-minute game, after which the Globetrotters topped another local outfit. Then the Trotters and the Celtics went at it for twenty minutes, with the Trotters winning, 25–21.

Araneta was effusive in his thanks to Abe. "This has been the greatest day in the history of Bacolod City," he said. "We are all the better for it." Bacolod City was indeed the better for it, because Araneta donated all gate receipts, less our guarantee, to a fund for construction of a free medical clinic.

Back in Manila we resumed our nightly stands at the Stadium. The humidity was sapping the players' energies, but they continued to hustle. During the last two days of our engagement, however, everybody nearly came apart at the seams. Those were the doubleheader dates, and when they were over I noted in my diary: "After ninety-eight games since London on June 2 and two successive doubleheaders in Manila, you never saw so many stationary forwards and centers."

In the matinee performance of the first doubleheader, our teams played Manila's two best clubs—the Aces and the Stars. The Celtics beat the Aces, 48–28, and the Trotters beat the Stars, 41–24. During the second game I announced to the crowd that "after Sunday, the last engagement of the Globetrotters here, jai-alai will return to the Stadium." Whereupon Goose Tatum ran over to the press table,

grabbed the microphone and made a momentous announcement. "After Sunday," he intoned, "comes Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday." The Filipino fans nearly broke up the furniture in their glee.

There again was the Tatum touch. If anyone else on the floor had done that, chances are the fans would have given out with a collective "So what?" But Tatum, the master, got a laugh with it.

That night the Trotters beat the Celtics, 63–45, and Saperstein played host at a party at a Manila supper club. There was a disturbing sign over the entrance: "All firearms must be checked at the door." This is routine, we were told, inasmuch as a good many citizens of Manila pack rods for reasons best known to themselves. The night club operators have no control over this, but they do object to shooting matches in their establishments. Our party broke up early because we all felt the need of sleep more than entertainment. On the way home Tatum told Abe: "Boss, if we stay in Manila much longer, you're gonna have to pay us overtime."

We wound up with another doubleheader. In the afternoon the Celtics beat the Manila Stars, 43–30, and the Trotters, really bearing down for the first time in the Philippines, waxed the Aces, 64–21, with Tatum playing for the Aces in the final four minutes. Goose, having scored eleven points for the Trotters, proceeded to score four for the Manila team.

"They wowed 'em again yesterday," one Manila sports reporter wrote about the Trotters, "and wherever they go from here they'll have them roaring and whooping and raving over the greatest—and wackiest—basketball team ever."

Commented another writer: "We saw the Globetrotters

really dish it out yesterday against the Manila Aces and, by gum, they made our stars look like a bunch of tenderfoots. Listening to Abe Saperstein on the bench, one would think he still has a lot to teach his players. He's a perfectionist, that guy, and he surely has very disciplined boys, which is something we cannot say of our local players. Thanks a lot for a wonderful experience, Abe, and 'bon voyage.' That goes for the rest of the lot, too."

In the night game the Trotters hammered the Celtics, 53–33, and we were finished with our business in Manila. Crowds gathered around our hotel when we returned after the game, and there were about five thousand people there the next morning when we left for the airport. There we found an estimated ten thousand Filipinos who had come to say good-by. And this was at eight o'clock in the morning.

We had played to a total of one hundred and ten thousand customers in Manila. We had played what probably was the first basketball game ever seen in a canebrake, and we had made a lot of new friends. Only Tony Lavelli was unhappy. Tony had injured his wrist and leg when waffled by a five-foot-four-inch Filipino opponent in the Celtics-Stars game, and while he wasn't upset by the leg injury he was fearful that his swollen wrist wouldn't permit him to play the accordion. However, he was able to perform in Hong Kong, our next port of call, but he played no more basketball for the remainder of the tour. "I guess I'm strictly a musician from now on," he said. "I'm getting too old for basketball." At the time, Tony was all of twenty-five.

At Hong Kong we established a precedent that may have shaken the entire British Empire to its foundations. We were booked to play in a stadium seating only twenty-five hundred, and the local promoter told us lugubriously that

he had three times that many demands for seats for each of the three days. "If only I could rent the Hong Kong Football Club ground," he said, "we could take care of everyone. But that is impossible."

"Why is it impossible?" Abe asked.

"Because," the promoter said, "for eighty-six years, ever since the club was founded, nothing but football [soccer football, British style] ever has been played there. It was useless even to consider the club as the site of your games. That is why I did not mention it before."

"Useless, eh?" Abe said. "Well, you never get anything if you don't ask for it. Let's go see the people at the club."

Abe and I made a quick trip across town to the club. It is a magnificent place, with an imposing clubhouse and shaven lawn. "Look at that," Abe said, pointing. There was a big grandstand on one side of the playing field and bleachers on the other. "On a guess," Abe said, "we could get about seven, eight thousand people in here."

We interviewed the British gentlemen who made policy for the club. At first the thought of any sport except football being played on their turf was repugnant to them, but when we pointed out that this was more than basketball, that it was an expression of international good will, they agreed to rent us the field. All except one of them, that is. He was a crusty Colonel Blimp type who insisted that no chaps playing a silly game like net ball would ever profane the turf of the Hong Kong Football Club. Inasmuch as this was the top dog of the organization, it appeared that we were licked.

Then I brought off what I consider the master stroke of my career. "Did you know, sir," I asked the crusty gentleman, "that Mr. Saperstein was born in London?"

"What, what?" he said.

"That's right," I said. "He was born in London, and

when we played there last June the people jammed the Empire Pool to see the team developed by the local boy who made good."

The Colonel Blimp guy muttered to himself. Finally he said: "A Londoner, you say? Well, in that case he may have the ruddy field for his silly game."

Within four hours we had set up our portable floor on the football field and were ready for business. The Hong Kong radio station had broadcast the information about the change of the site of the game and the availability of more tickets, and the eight thousand seats were sold. As the *China Mail,* of Hong Kong, reported the next morning the Trotters were given a "tumultuous welcome." Sir Arthur Morse, president of the Amateur Sports Federation of Hong Kong, did the first-ball tossing, and the Globetrotters took it from there, beating the Celtics, 37–33.

We were given the run of the clubhouse, and there Beverly Farris nearly established another precedent. A sign at the entrance reads LADIES AND DOGS NOT ALLOWED, and I understand this rule had been enforced for eighty-six years. It was enforced against Beverly, but not before she had entered the building. Then a member of the club came over to her and said: "Young woman, I regret to inform you that we do not permit ladies here. There is a sign outside to that effect."

"I'm sorry," Beverly replied. "I didn't see the sign."

"I am sorry, too," the gentleman said. "Just between us, I think it is about time we broke down some of these stuffy rules so that pretty young women like you could come and impart a little cheer to the club."

We played to sell-out crowds the next two afternoons, and on our last evening in Hong Kong we were guests of the Football Club at a dinner. The feature was the presentation

of Hong Kong Football Club pennants to every member of the Globetrotters. It marked the first time that such a presentation had been made to anyone not a member of the club.

As we were leaving, the Colonel Blimp type gentleman called Abe aside. "It was a good show you gave," he said. "A deucedly good show. Of course, one would expect that of a Londoner."

"But I'm an American citizen now," Abe said. "Have been ever since I was a youngster."

"But you're a Londoner by the blood, my lad," the man said. "By George, you can tell a Londoner anywhere. Deucedly good show you put on. I hope you chaps will come back again."

From Hong Kong we flew to Taipei, Formosa, to play before the Nationalist China military forces. On the first day it rained, but a jam-packed crowd of eleven thousand sat in an outdoor stadium to watch the Trotters beat the Celtics, 50–41, and the following day it was broiling hot, but capacity crowds showed up to view a morning-afternoon doubleheader.

In the morning, the Celtics beat a Chinese Air Force team, 29–26, and the Globetrotters beat the "Seven Tigers of Formosa," of which there were ten, by 47–23. One of the "Seven Tigers" was a lanky Chinese named Wong Nicheun, who could make almost any college team in the United States. Another was forty-two-year-old Sergeant Chiang Wong, generally credited with having introduced basketball to China some twenty years earlier. When Goose Tatum learned Wong's age he walked over to shake hands with him. "I am honored to meet such a great player," said the sergeant, who speaks English.

"You're honored?" Tatum said. "Man, I'm proud to

meet a basketball player who is older than a lot of people say I am!"

In the afternoon the temperature was 120 degrees in the sun—and there was no shade. The Trotters and the Celtics soaked towels in water and wrapped them around their heads. They looked like a group of maharajahs bouncing around on the court, but the trick worked. No one suffered sunstroke. The Trotters scored a 17–0 victory over a team of Nationalist soldiers in a five-minute first game, then beat the Celtics, 51–42, in a regulation contest.

We must have met every military big shot on Formosa except Chiang Kai-shek himself. General C. J. Chow, the Nationalists' Chief of Staff attended one game and General J. C. Kuo, Minister of National Defense, came to another. But the Chinese soldier who made the greatest impression on us was an enlisted man—Sergeant Chang Ying-wu.

He was seven feet eight inches tall and weighed three hundred and fifteen pounds, and what a man he could have been on tap-ins. A fellow like that wouldn't have to be a well-rounded basketball player. Simply put him on the court with four fast players, station him under the opponents' basket and feed him the ball.

"Abe," I said to the boss, "why don't you sign that guy and take him back to the States for one of your teams? He'd be a gate attraction."

Saperstein shook his head. "Nothing doing," he replied. "For one thing, I never tamper with another man's property. He's signed up with Chiang Kai-shek. And can you imagine what his food bill would be? We'd have to sell out every night to get enough money to feed him."

☆ *Court Life with the Nipponese*

BACK IN 1927 WHEN ABE SAPERSTEIN DECIDED TO PUT HIS show on the road, well-meaning friends advised against it. By 1952 he had long since proved his point, but he still was getting advice from well-meaning friends.

When Abe announced that the Globetrotters would visit Japan on the trip around the world a certain baseball magnate (not Bill Veeck) telephoned him. "Do not do it, old friend," the baseball guy said. "Do not waste your substance in Japan. That is baseball territory. The Japs know very little about any other sport and care less. You will lose not only your shirt but your socks and shoes if you go there."

Abe thanked him for the advice. We went to Japan.

The Globetrotters probably could have established residence in Japan, stood for office and been elected to the Japanese Diet, so great was their impact on the Japanese people wherever they went. Just about the only times any of the Trotters enjoyed privacy was when they locked themselves in their hotel rooms. On the streets, in restaurants—everywhere they appeared in public—they were met by Japanese, young and old, who simply wanted to touch them or perhaps invite them to their homes for a meal. "These people," Leon Hillard commented in Osaka one night, "are going to kill us with kindness."

Our arrival in Tokyo was a Hollywood job in itself. As we

stepped from the plane there were a dozen pretty girls dressed in native costume to greet us and hand us flowers. A motorcade of fifteen convertibles carried us through the Ginza, Tokyo's great shopping center, where, according to police estimates, two million people lined the streets to bid welcome to the Trotters. Three helicopters hovered overhead, dropping pamphlets announcing the schedule of games.

"How different this is from the receptions we got twenty-five years ago," Abe observed. "In some of those little towns in the Middle West the only person who came out to greet us was the chief of police, and all he wanted was to make sure we weren't vagrants."

The games in Japan were sponsored by the Mainichi newspapers, a chain similar to Hearst or Scripps-Howard in this country. Haku Hamamoto, the Japanese promoter, told us that reserved seats for the games in Tokyo had been sold out three days after the sale began. "If you could but arrange to stay an additional week," he said, "we all could get rich."

The first game was played in the Korakuen Stadium in Tokyo, a magnificent ball park seating twenty-five thousand. A baseball game was played there that afternoon and two hours after its conclusion the basketball floor had been laid on the infield. Prior to the game we were guests at a luncheon at the Imperial Hotel given by Prince Takamatsu, brother of Emperor Hirohito. "I have seen basketball games," the Prince told us, "but I know that what I have seen in Nippon is as nothing when compared with what you are going to show us this evening. I thank you for coming to Nippon."

The Prince was the ball-tosser that night at the stadium. He was hissed, which was good, because in Japan, as in

Singapore, hissing is a sound of approval. Then the Prince sat back with the other twenty-three thousand onlookers and watched the Celtics beat Kanto College, 32–12, in a ten-minute contest and the Globetrotters follow up by beating Kanto, 41–18 in ten minutes. The Celtics, crippled by the loss of Lavelli, added Jack Leahy, a former DePaul University star, who was stationed with the Army in Tokyo, to their squad. Jack got a ten-day leave and hopped from Army drab to Celtic green.

In the feature game the Trotters walloped the Celtics, 41–18, as Tatum and Haynes sparkled with their specialties. It was during this game that Goose, as "tailback" in the football routine, drop-kicked a field goal from the middle of the court and got no more than the usual amount of laughter and applause!

Merely to drop-kick a ball *near* the basket from forty-five feet out is a feat. Saperstein has estimated that the odds against a player's kicking the ball *into* the basket are about fifteen hundred to one. On only four other occasions in Globetrotter history had players drop-kicked field goals. Bernie Price did it in 1933 at Mankato, Minnesota. Sonny Boswell turned the trick at Port Angeles, Washington, one night in 1939, and ten years later Johnny Wilson performed the incredible feat of booting goals on successive nights in Anderson, Indiana, and Cleveland, Ohio.

But now here was Tatum doing the virtually impossible and the Japanese fans weren't particularly excited about it. I walked over to Hamamoto. "What's the matter?" I said. "If Goose had done that in a game in the States the fans would have stopped the game and rushed down to carry him around on their shoulders."

"In the States, yes," Hamamoto replied. "The people there realize how difficult a thing like that is. But here, you

see, the people have been told so often that the Globetrotters can do anything that they think this is something Tatum does in every game."

The following night the Kanto College "Old Boys," or alumni, played our teams. The Celtics beat them, 45–14, in the first game and the Trotters coasted to a 30–15 victory in the second, after which the Trotters beat the Celtics, 51–37. The crowd again numbered twenty-three thousand, and Renny Brooks brought the house down during the intermission show when he sang "My Blue Heaven" in Japanese. Tatum also tore the place up during the feature game when, feigning a shoulder injury to set up his foul shot routine, he came to the scorer's table and had the announcer inquire in Japanese: "Is there a dentist in the house?"

After the game Abe and I had dinner with Eddie Fisher, the singer, who then was a private first class in the Army. Eddie was en route to Korea with a Special Services unit to entertain our troops there and we were impressed by his humility. He had seen our game, and since then has been a devoted fan of the Globetrotters. If the Trotters play in a city where Eddie is appearing he tries to show up for at least a portion of the game.

It rained hard the next day, making play impossible. It wasn't a wasted day, however. We met Joe DeBello. Joe is a former Chicago taxi driver who was stationed with the occupation forces in Japan after the war, married a Japanese girl and decided to remain in Tokyo when it came time for him to be discharged from the Army. He bought a hack and went to work. Now he is the operator of a fleet of cabs in Tokyo, Osaka and Yokohama.

"I figured you guys might need some help getting around," Joe said. "Well, here I am." From then on Joe was our guardian angel. He took us to out-of-the-way res-

taurants ("the food is better and it doesn't cost as much as in the high-class places"), helped us haggle with merchants in purchasing gifts and put his taxis at our service.

DeBello's taxis carried us to Yokohama, where we played before a crowd of fifteen thousand in Yokohama Stadium, the majority of them GI's who were there as our guests. Most of these kids were Korean veterans who had been sent to the Army's Rest and Replacement Center from the battle-front. According to Army policy, every ninety days a GI was relieved from front-line duty and sent to Yokohama for a week of relaxation. The Globetrotters and the Celtics worked hard for the boys, each walloping the Kanto College team in preliminaries, then clowning it up in the big game, which the Trotters won, 33–22. Then it was back to Tokyo for a personal appearance before ten thousand GI's in the Ernie Pyle Theater, arranged by Major Irving Fleischer, the Army Special Services Officer in Tokyo. The Trotters did the circle routine and Haynes gave a demonstration of dribbling. "Man, it was good to work in front of an all-American crowd again," Tatum said. "You knew that they knew exactly what you were doin'."

The next day we went by train to Nagoya. If the railroad's auditors had trouble making the books balance at the end of the year, I can tell them why. We ate lunch aboard the train. I thought Hamamoto had paid for the meals. Hamamoto was under the impression that I had paid for them. In Nagoya we compared notes and found that we all had been freeloaders. "Maybe we should check with the railroad," I said, "and find out how much we owe them."

"In your country," said Haku, "that might be the thing to do. But here it would involve filling out countless forms. Officials would call on you, not once but many times, to investigate. It would take two weeks to settle the matter."

I gave in. I had had enough of forms and investigative officials.

We got a big-time welcome in Nagoya—pretty girls passing out flowers, a parade through the main streets and gifts from the mayor of the city. We played that night in an indoor arena to a capacity crowd of seven thousand. The Trotters beat the Celtics, 54–41, and Saperstein lost money. There were a number of small fees connected with the staging of the game that no one had bothered to tell Abe about. This group of carpenters had to be paid a fee for coming in before the regular starting time to erect a press table. There was a city tax on athletic events that had been overlooked. And so it went. By the time Saperstein finished paying off it cost him $2800.

At Osaka, where we played four games, rain held down the crowd in Nishinomiya Stadium the first night, but we played, with the Trotters winning from the Celtics, 45–35. Before the game ended Saperstein had the announcer inform the spectators that all were invited to attend the following night's game as his guests. "Mr. Saperstein cannot regulate the weather," the announcer said in Japanese, "but he hopes that tomorrow evening will be more suitable to basketball and that you will all return." Most of the fans came back, and we played to eleven thousand the second night.

One evening in the Hotel Osaka Abe and I ordered soup as the first course of our dinners. It turned out to be clear consommé. Both of us like rice in our soup, so we asked for rice. The waiter summoned the headwaiter. We made the request again. The headwaiter went into the kitchen for a conference with the chef. Then the headwaiter returned and said: "So sorry—no rice." The next morning at breakfast I ordered two eight-minute eggs. Pretty soon out came

the waiter with eight two-minute eggs. You may have the Japanese eating places, and welcome. I'll take my father's delicatessen.

The Hotel Osaka gave the Globetrotters the biggest advertisement they ever have enjoyed. On the front of the hotel was erected a gigantic likeness of Goose Tatum in Globetrotter uniform, arms outstretched and each hand clutching a basketball. The figure was four stories high and beneath it was a big sign in Japanese, informing one and all that this was the headquarters of the Harlem Globetrotters, the world's greatest basketball team. Tatum borrowed Marques Haynes' camera and made photographs of the sign. "If I don't take pictures home with me they'll never believe what a big man I am around here," Goose explained.

The victims of both the Trotters and the Celtics in Osaka were the Kansai College team and the Kansai "Old Boys." The Kansai varsity was beaten by our teams the third night in Osaka, after which the Trotters beat the Celtics, 42–25, and the "Old Boys" went down on the final night in games played at Namba Stadium before a crowd of fourteen thousand five hundred. The Trotters won the feature that evening, 38–34.

By this time, some of the officials of the Japanese Basketball Federation were asking questions: Why weren't their teams able to provide more competition for the Americans? How could the Americans score so frequently without seeming to exert themselves unduly while the Nipponese gave out continually with the old college try and were unable to score more than a few field goals per game?

So the officials conducted an investigation. Deliver me from investigations, whether they be by the United States Amateur Athletic Union or the Japanese Basketball Federa-

tion. After a solid month of deliberation, the Japanese officials issued a statement. As Steve Kodama, a Japanese sports writer, reported in the *Nippon Times*—and Steve was in disagreement with the statement—the Globetrotters had brought with them backboards and baskets that had been specially made to suit their style of play. The boards, said the statement, were of special plastic and did not give the Japanese players the type of rebounds to which they were accustomed. The basket was attached to the backboard by three braces, instead of one brace as is customary in Japan. This made the basket too taut for the Japanese players, according to the officials.

Commented Kodama on all this: "Ho-hum."

At no time during the series did we receive a complaint about the equipment from a single Japanese player or coach. They seemed to realize—even if the Federation officials didn't—that the level of basketball performance in Japan at present is approximately that of a not-too-fast high school league in the United States, and that they are weak in fundamentals. They hustle like crazy, but when it comes to trying to work the ball through a tightly knit defense they lack the know-how. They also have what seems to be typical in the Orient—a reluctance to shoot. It is as though the player feels that he will be embarrassed if he shoots and misses—so he passes the ball to somebody else. I remember one game between the Globetrotters and the Kanto "Old Boys" when Tatum, weary of waiting for a Kanto player to make up his mind as to whether or not he was going to shoot, stepped aside, pointed to the basket and said, "Shoot, man, you're wide open."

The Japanese players and coaches learned much from the Globetrotters. Such being their nature, they will work at it

doggedly, and I foresee the day when Japanese teams will be among the best to be found in the Far East.

Back in Tokyo, we finished off with three games at Korakuen Stadium. The first night a combination of the Globetrotters and Celtics walloped a team representing the U. S. Army Security Section, and in the wind-up the Trotters had to come from behind in the last minute to beat the Celtics, 33–32, with Hillard scoring the winning basket. The next afternoon we played a game to accommodate people who had held tickets for the contest that had been rained out a week earlier. That night we played the finale, which looked like a burlesque on a burlesque on basketball during the first half. Just before the start of the game, the stadium maintenance crew had mopped the floor with very wet mops. For twenty minutes the players slipped and skidded, but at halftime Abe ordered sand spread on the floor. This helped, although the players said they felt as though they were running on a surface of ball bearings, and the Trotters won, 52–50, beating off a late rally by the Celtics.

Our intermission show had an extra touch of class. Seven Powers models, on a fashion tour of Japan, sat at courtside and took a bow at halftime. The names—although nobody in the crowd seemed to care about names—were Glendora Donaldson, Charlotte Payne, Sally Ferguson, Nancy Gaggin, Teddy Ayer, Stasia Linder and Evelyn Milroy, and the girls to whom they belonged were enough to make an American bachelor long for home.

Late in the game, a GI seated near the Globetrotter bench began to heckle Saperstein. The guy didn't like this or that or the other thing, and he so informed Abe. Saperstein took it for a time, then turned to the heckler and said with a grin: "There must be a Philadelphian in the crowd." It broke me up. By the time I stopped laughing the Powers

models had departed, and it was too late to see what I could do about a date.

There wouldn't have been much time for romancing, come to think of it. We went directly from the stadium to Haneda Airport to board a U. S. Marine transport plane for Guam.

Departure time was 2:30 A.M. In spite of the hour, a crowd, estimated by police to be about ten thousand, was at the airport to see us off. They cheered, they whistled, and some of them broke through the police barriers trying to reach the players and deliver a personal farewell.

The nicest send-off we got, though, appeared in the edition of the *Pacific Stars and Stripes* that hit the streets a few hours after our departure. Sergeant Clarkson Crume wrote: "The finest group of people to pass through this town in a long time left Haneda Airport early this morning for Guam. Abe Saperstein herded his gang aboard an airliner, and off they went. Probably nothing will equal the impression the Harlem Globetrotters made here until the Globetrotters themselves pass through again.

"A word in the English language which is greatly overworked, and one which we conscientiously try to avoid, is 'nice.' But that is the word to describe Abe Saperstein. There is a nice guy. You don't meet too many people like Abe in this world and when you do, you don't forget them."

Certainly the Japanese haven't forgotten Abe. You should see the fan mail he has been receiving from Japan. I'll bet not even General MacArthur does as well in that department.

☆ *Guam and the Golden Gate*

FOR YEARS I PRIDED MYSELF ON BEING ABOUT AS UNEMOtional as a fellow can be without forfeiting his entry money in the human race. I suppose you get that way knocking around in sports. You see so much in the way of heroics, real and otherwise, that you take it all in stride. You watch Bobby Shantz strike out the side in an All-Star Game or Doak Walker run for the winning touchdown in the last minute of play or Goose Tatum captivate a capacity crowd with his artistry, and you say: "O.K. But it's still fun and games. So what's the percentage in getting hepped up about it?"

I make confession here and now, however, that during a basketball game on the island of Guam in the Marianas I shed tears. Honest tears.

Playing on Guam was like playing in Akron, Ohio, or Portland, Oregon, or Madison, Wisconsin, or any other American city. The island is teeming with American civilians and service personnel, and they gave the Globetrotters a typical American welcome. We played three games in an airplane hangar at Harmon Field, which is a plug for the construction job that was done on the hangar—because if the construction had been faulty the spectators would have blown the roof off, they made so much noise.

The games were scheduled for 7 P.M., but each day as

early as 2 P.M. people would begin to file into the hangar to take seats. On opening night Carlton Skinner, Governor of Guam, tossed up the game's first ball and did it so enthusiastically that it seemed it might never come down. Lee Garner and Bob Karstens, the opposing centers, waited until the ball came down out of the stratosphere before they jumped.

"If we had gone up for the ball right after the man threw it," Garner said, "we would have sailed right through the roof." The Trotters beat the Celtics, 46–33, as Tatum and Haynes led the clowning. The next night the Trotters won, 52–29. And then came the emotional tingle.

Between the halves of the final game, which the Globetrotters won, 60–46, Captain John L. Collis, administrative officer of the Marianas Command of the U. S. Navy, made a speech. He addressed Abe, the Globetrotters and the rest of us in the troupe:

"On behalf of Governor Skinner, Admiral Litch [Rear Admiral Ernest W. Litch, Naval commander in the Marianas], General Wimsatt [General Robert W. C. Wimsatt, in command of Air Force personnel] and the entire civilian and military population of Guam," Captain Collis said, "I want to express our deep appreciation for your fine performances on this island."

Thus far, it was the same speech we had heard in many other places, with only the names changed. But the Captain continued:

"In all walks of life you have generated more enthusiasm, you have contributed more to the morale of all of us here, than anything that has happened to us since Liberation Day some eight years ago.

"And most certainly all America must be as grateful to you, and as proud of you as we are here in Guam. For in-

deed you have lifted up the hearts of mankind all over the world for the past twenty-five years. You have demonstrated to people in the far corners of the earth certain characteristics of our way of life—good entertainment, good clean humor and, above all, good sportsmanship."

The Captain paused. There were five thousand people in the hangar. There wasn't a sound.

"For it is not the material that America makes that counts," Captain Collis went on. "It's the material that Americans are made of.

"We will remember you for a long, long time. And now, ladies and gentlemen of the audience, we want to give our guests something to remember us by—let's stand up and give them an ovation for their memory book!"

Well, sir, those five thousand people—most of them servicemen—stood up and roared. The demonstration must have lasted ten minutes, but around the three-minute mark I realized that my eyes were wet. The Captain's speech and the ovation had hit me where I live. I glanced at Abe. He was having trouble with the tear ducts, too. And so were most of the Trotters.

When the demonstration ended, Saperstein walked to the microphone to express the thanks of all of us.

"Of all the places we have been on this trip around the world," he said, "we never have felt so close to home as we do here. Until tonight, I wouldn't have believed that the Globetrotters ever could be given a greater reception than the one we received in Berlin last year. But this tops it. I thank you for your kindness. And if, as Captain Collis said, all America must be grateful to us, we most certainly are grateful to America. For only in our great country could the Harlem Globetrotters have come into being and grown."

The crowd cut loose with another ovation—and I had to

root around in my pockets to find a handkerchief. It was an overwhelming experience.

From Guam we flew to Honolulu aboard a Navy transport, with stop-offs at Kwajalein in the Marshalls and Johnston Island. We checked in at Hickam Field, the Air Force base outside Honolulu, and almost immediately went to Block Stadium where the Trotters beat the Celtics, 48–40, in a game played for the entertainment of service personnel stationed on the island of Oahu. Then we were driven to the Moana Hotel on Waikiki Beach. Nobody made a speech about it, but again the Globetrotters had established a precedent—this marked the first time that Negroes had been permitted in the swank hotel area.

We had just settled down at the hotel when Marques Haynes went to Abe with a telegram. "My sister passed away yesterday," he said. "Is it all right if I go home?"

"Of course it's all right, Mark," said Abe. "We'll get you out of here right away." And instead of calling me, whose job it was to attend to such things, Saperstein himself telephoned the airline and booked Haynes on the midnight flight to the Mainland. Then he helped Mark pack and accompanied him to the airport. In the total picture this was a very small incident, but it reflects the nature of the man. One of his boys needed assistance and Abe dropped everything to give it to him.

We played a three-night stand to capacity crowds of nine thousand each at the Honolulu Civic Auditorium, and it is not inaccurate to say that most of us had just about enough strength to taxi to the Auditorium every evening, do our jobs and return to the hotel. The trip had been a tremendous physical drain, and now that it was nearly over we were ready for a rest cure. Still, the players and entertainers had enough left to delight the Hawaiian crowds,

plus visitors from the Mainland. Walter O'Keefe, the comedian, saw the first night's game, in which the Trotters walloped the Celtics, 51–29, and sought out Saperstein. "I've been in the laugh business all my life," he said, "but I've never seen anything funnier than those clowns of yours."

"I'm glad you thought they were funny," Abe replied. "They're all so tired that they're straining for laughs."

"If that's so," said O'Keefe, "I think I'd prefer not to see them when they're feeling up to par. I'd probably burst a blood vessel laughing."

We finished up in Honolulu with the Trotters beating the Celtics, 54–47 the second night and 75–63 the third. Then, after a farewell party at the hotel, where the *pièce de résistance* was a gigantic "silver anniversary" cake provided by the management, we went to the airport and boarded a Pan American stratocruiser bound for San Francisco. With the traditional leis about our necks we sat back and made book on who would be the first to sight the Golden Gate Bridge.

During the flight Abe and I took stock. Within a few hours we would complete the first round-the-world tour in the history of basketball, and the first by any sports organization since the New York Giants and Chicago White Sox baseball clubs made the swing by boat in 1913. Since June 2—exactly four months ago—the Globetrotters had played 108 games, and had won them all, before 1,100,000 spectators in 58 cities. Counting the South America trip, the team had played—and won—141 games before 1,500,000 people in 72 cities. For the entire 1951–1952 season, which had begun the previous October, the Trotters had won 325 games and lost 8, giving the team a 25-year total of 4233 victories and 260 defeats for a percentage of .941.

"When do we go around the world again, Abe?" I asked.

"Probably never," he replied. "A trip like this is too hard on everyone who makes it. But it has been the supreme thrill of my lifetime. I remember saying in 1927 that maybe some day the Harlem Globetrotters would justify their name and trot around the world. Everybody laughed at me. But now we've done it."

What does a man think about when he has realized the dream of a lifetime? If he's Abe Saperstein he thinks about the people who have made such realization possible—his pretty wife, Sylvia, the Chicago girl he married in 1934, who stuck with him during the lean days and who always has insisted upon remaining in the background . . . Toots Wright, Fat Long, Kid Oliver, Andy Washington and Bill Tupelo, the first of the Globetrotters . . . Inman Jackson, Rock Anderson, Tommy Brookins, Opal Courtney, Duke Cumberland and the other men who played for him while the Trotters were building a name . . . Harry Hannin . . . W. S. Welch, the organization's business manager . . . and countless more.

"How lucky can a fellow who was an immigrant kid get?" he remarked. "I've had a lot of fun, and along the way I've had so many people help me. Without their help I never could have come this far."

Beverly Farris was the first to spot the Golden Gate Bridge through the fog that hung over San Francisco. As many a GI has learned there are few sights to compare with that of the great span when you're an American returning home after an extended absence. The plane landed and the Harlem Globetrotters and party were home again. There was no great crowd to greet us, but no matter. The crowds would appear in arenas from coast to coast to laugh with the Globetrotters.

And in June, 1953, the Trotters returned to London to play at the Empire Pool as part of the official Coronation celebration. Abe Saperstein, the kid from Whitechapel, took his team back to his native land to have a hand in one of Britain's most brilliant moments.

The Coronation engagement was the first leg of the 1953 summer tour taking us through Europe and into North Africa and the Middle East. We hoped that Queen Elizabeth herself might be able to drop in at Empire Pool during one of the ten nights we played there. But even though Her Royal Highness couldn't come, we had a nice representation from the dignitary department. Staying on our floor in the Mayfair Hotel were some important personages from abroad, and all of them attended one of our games. Our guests included His Highness Shaikh Sir Solman Ben Hamid, ruler of Bahrein; His Royal Highness Prince Chula of Thailand; His Highness Mukama of Toro Uganda, and Hon. J. J. Cahill, premier of New South Wales, Australia.

The biggest news for the Globetrotters during Coronation Week was the debut of Walter Dukes, a unanimous choice for the 1953 All-American teams while at Seton Hall, who signed a contract with Saperstein on June 8 and immediately flew to London to join the team. Dukes stands exactly seven feet and was probably America's most highly regarded college player in the 1952–1953 season.

The British fans were amazed that a man of such height could be so agile. With two hundred and twenty pounds spread over his seven-foot frame, Dukes looks almost gaunt, but he can move well and hold his own in any scuffle under the backboards. One of the factors in Dukes' signing with the Globetrotters was that the Saperstein organization has a longer playing season than any other professional team, thus assuring Walter a greater income.

In fact, the Trotters have a season that practically never ends! That day we arrived in San Francisco after the world tour, there was a press conference at the St. Francis Hotel. At its conclusion, Abe addressed the Globetrotters.

"Boys," he said, "you've worked hard. You've earned a vacation. Go to your homes now and relax."

Some vacation. It was October 2. The coming season for the Harlem Globetrotters would begin on October 15.

Champions Against Odds

by AL J. STUMP

Twenty-one sports profiles of famous men and women whose strong fighting spirit made them stars despite almost overwhelming handicaps.

To this collection belong the great names of many sports—Earl Sande and Eddie Arcaro, racing; Rob Richards and Bob Mathias, track; Bobby Jones and Sam Snead, golf; Pat McCormick and Vicki Draves, diving; Mel Ott and Ralph Kiner, baseball, and many others.

None of them ever stopped trying. Each faced a hurdle—sometimes physical; sometimes social, racial, or financial—and each overcame it with the same outstanding courage. At times they stumbled and seemed lost, but within them was the power no chemist or soul-searcher can define which made them gain immortality.

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Around the World with the

Harlem Globetrotters

DAVE ZINKOFF with EDGAR WILLIAMS

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ABE SAPERSTEIN, the man who found a golden basket, was born in London and came to America when he was four years old. He is owner, manager and coach of the Harlem Globetrotters. An effective combination of sweat and genius accounts for his large share in making basketball a popular international sport. Mr. Saperstein has also contributed a great deal to other sports, including football and baseball. His scouting shrewdness discovered Minnie Minoso, Satchel Paige, Larry Doby, Roy Campanella and others for the major leagues. He travels more than 100,000 miles a year in the pursuit of his many interests.



Sanford Roth

DAVE ZINKOFF is tour secretary of the Harlem Globetrotters and plays a large part in getting the team around its world-wide itinerary. He is also known as the *Voice of Philadelphia* for his fame as an announcer of sporting activities. Co-author Zinkoff is a graduate of Temple University, where he got his start nationally by announcing the first Sugar Bowl Game, between Temple and Tulane. With the Special Services during World War II, he was decorated for creating a sports program for Icelandic youth. When not traveling with the Globetrotters he co-ordinates shows for Army hospitals.

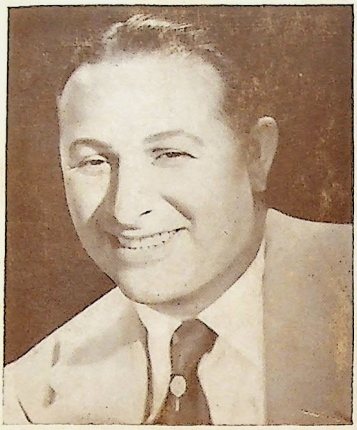


Philadelphia Bulletin

EDGAR WILLIAMS is a feature writer on the staff of *Today*, the Sunday magazine of the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. His stories have appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Coronet*, *Boys' Life*, *Open Road* and *Baseball Digest*, and he is represented in *Best Sports Stories, 1953*. He is a native of Lansdale, Pennsylvania, and a graduate of West Chester State Teachers College. Since school days he has been associated with newspapers, radio and sports. He is a member of the Philadelphia Basketball Writers Association. Mr. Williams is married and the father of two children.



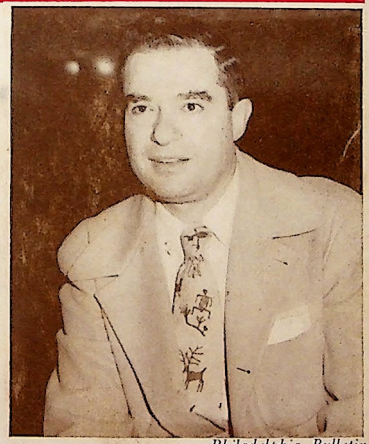
Lloyd Kahn



Seawell Studios

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